



NEWS / A2

Ordoñez—lawyer, poet, diplomat—dies at 86

Top ZTE protagonists 'not believable'—survey

By Inquirer staff

ON THE EVE OF THE RESUMPTION OF THE Senate hearing on the broadband deal, Pulse Asia released a survey that showed 58 percent of Filipino adults, or three in every five, felt that all of the key protagonists in the scandal were "equally not believable."

Pulse Asia yesterday said 68 percent of

TOP ZTE/A10

METRO / A19

Police officer handling Dalaig case relieved over missing money

ACROSS / A16

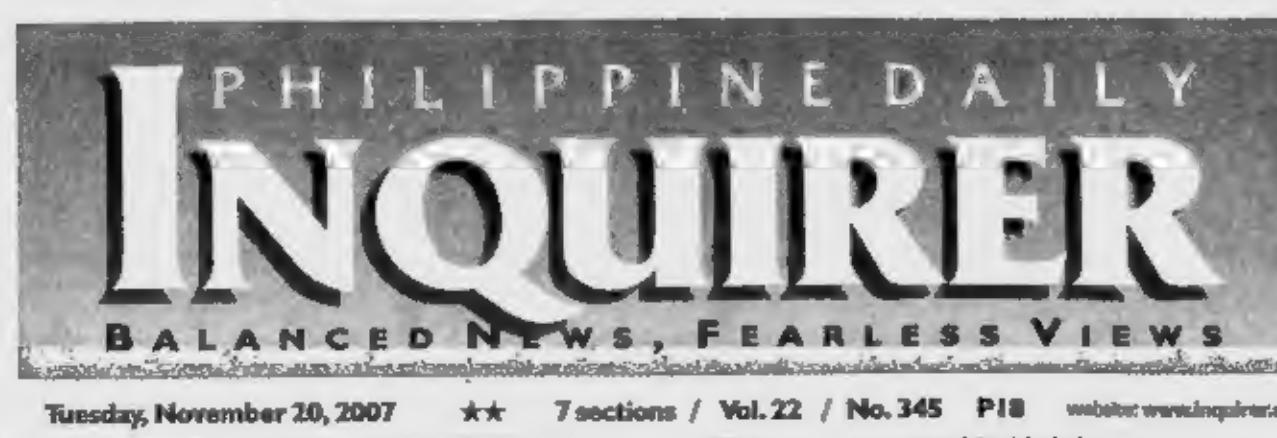
MILF allies MNLF fears on new pact

WORLD / A22

Bangladesh cyclone toll nears 3,000

SPORTS / A23

Bob Arum still wants Pacquiao-De La Hoya dream fight



World Bank defers RP loan, probes graft

\$232M for roads on hold

By Doris C. Dumao

THE WORLD BANK HAS put on hold a \$232-million soft loan for a major road-building program in the Philippines after irregularities supposedly involving bid rigging were uncovered during the first phase of the project, officials said yesterday.

In a statement from Washington, World Bank vice president for the East Asia and Pacific Region, Jim Adams, said signs of procurement problems in the first phase cropped up starting in 2003.

"Between 2003 and 2006, the World Bank rejected two

WORLD BANK/A4



PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO walks ahead of the ASEAN leaders who have gathered in Singapore for the 13th ASEAN Summit. Behind her are, from left, Indonesian President Bambang Yudhoyono, Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah.

Malacañang denies talk of corruption

By Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY denied that concerns over corruption led the World Bank to reject two large road-building contracts, worth around \$33 million, in the Philippines.

Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. said the decision to cancel three biddings in 2006 was "precisely to eliminate the root of the problem."

He made this assertion in a memorandum to Secretary Gerge Remonde, chief of the Presidential Management Staff.

MALACAÑANG/A4

Only 25% keen to oust corrupt RP president

ONLY 25 PERCENT OF FILIPINOS are willing to take drastic measures to oust a president linked to corruption, according to the latest Pulse Asia survey.

This notwithstanding the survey's finding that three in five Filipinos (59 percent) believe a president should resign from office if s/he is involved in graft and corruption, s/he tolerates such wrongdoing or a member of his/her family is implicated.

The survey was conducted from Oct. 20 to Oct. 31, using face-to-face interviews with a

ONLY 25%/A4

PNP: Blast planned in ex-solon's store



POLICE present Batasan bombing suspects Caidar Aunal, Adham Kusain and Ikram Indama at the Department of Justice where criminal charges were filed against them on Monday.

By Leila B. Salaverria

THREE DETAINED SUSPECTS in last week's Batasan bombing that killed Rep. Wahab Akbar were named yesterday in a police complaint filed with the Department of Justice that gave details of how it was planned and carried out by assassins known to Akbar's political rivals.

The complaint said that the suspects had confessed that the bombing targeted Akbar and that it was planned at the Greenbucks Grocery, owned by former House Deputy Speaker Gerry Salapuddin, who ran and lost against Akbar's wife in the elections for Basilan governor in May.

Aides of Salapuddin and another Basilan politician, Mindanao party-list Rep. Mujuhatman, were named in the complaint filed by the Philippine National Police.

Akbar, 47, and three congressional aides were killed in the Nov. 13 blast at the Batasan south wing driveway. Twelve others were wounded, including Representatives

Henry Teves and Luzviminda Hagan.

Salapuddin and Hataman were not among those named in the complaint. The two had stepped forward to deny involvement in the unprecedented

PNP/A5

8 SBMA execs face raps over 'hot' cars

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) has recommended the filing of charges against eight officials of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) and the Bureau of Customs (BOC) for alleged conspiracy in the smuggling of luxury vehicles through the Subic Bay Freeport.

Three sources on Monday confirmed that the recommendation had been sent to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita. The charges included falsification of public documents and violations of the antigrift law.

The recommendation covered SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza, Deputy Administrator Jose Calimlim, seaport manager Perfecto Pascual, customs collector Marietta Zamorano and four other BOC officials, according to an SBMA official who obtained a copy of the report on Friday.

The source was not among those to be charged.

Arreza and Calimlim are presidential appointees to the SBMA, a state corporation overseeing the conversion of the Subic Naval Base into an economic zone.

"We've sent formal charges,"

BSBMA/A4

Ms Arroyo added: "Until the Philippine Congress sees that happen, it would have extreme difficulty in ratifying the ASEAN Charter."

Suu Kyi, the symbol of Burma's yearning for democracy, has spent 12 of the last 18 years under house arrest.

ASEAN CHARTER/A10



Gonzalez back at DOJ after going to 'hell'

By Leila B. Salaverria

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL Gonzalez went to "hell and back" and when he reported for work yesterday, he was welcomed with balloons, streamers and even a flea market.

Addressing employees of the Department of Justice, Gonzalez recounted his medical ordeal, thanking everyone who prayed for his recovery.

GONZALEZ/A10



WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The provinces of Cebu, Bohol, Northern Negros, Iloilo and Guimaras Island will experience stormy weather with rough to very rough seas. Northern Mindanao and the rest of Visayas including Palawan will experience rains which may trigger flashfloods and landslides, and occasional gusty winds. And the coastal waters along these areas will be moderate to rough. Palawan and the rest of Mindanao will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms while Luzon will be mostly cloudy with scattered rainshowers.

Metro Manila	CLOUDY WITH RAINES	WINDY/BUULET	STORMY
Bogota	CLOUDY WITH RAINES	WINDY	STORMY
Tuguegarao	CLOUDY WITH RAINES	COOL	STORMY
Lucena	CLOUDY WITH RAINES	TOUCHING	GUSTY WINDS
Cagayan	CLOUDY WITH RAINES	DRY, BREEZY	CLOUDY WITH RAINES
Taytay	CLOUDY WITH RAINES	ZAMBORONG	CLOUDY WITH RAINES
Laguna	CLOUDY WITH RAINES	COOL	BREEZY WINDS
Cebu	CLOUDY WITH RAINES	DRY	CLOUDY WITH RAINES

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EZ2

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(In exact order)

Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening

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MEGALOTTO 6/45

1 4 15 18 30 37

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Senate may probe Glorietta blast

Escudero urges colleagues to act on Trillanes resolution

WHAT'S INSIDE

KIDS LEARN about respect at PDI Read-Along

/A11

DEPED STARTS 'Learning beyond 4 walls' program

/A9

MORE PINAYS smoke than other Asians, says study

/A9

By Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Tina G. Santos

IN THE WAKE OF CONFLICTING FINDINGS IN the Glorietta mall explosion, Sen. Francis Escudero yesterday urged his colleagues to act on the resolution of Sen. Antonio Trillanes for the Senate to conduct an independent probe of the blast.

"I don't know why it has not been acted upon but I agree that the Senate should look into it now," said Escudero in a text message to the INQUIRER.

"I bewail the inequity that when prominent people are victimized, government action is swift but not in the case of the Makati blast where ordinary Filipinos were victimized," said Escudero, referring to the swift resolution of the Batasang Pampana bombing last week.

Trillanes had filed Senate Resolution 174 calling on the public order and illegal drugs committee to investigate the Oct. 19 blast at Glorietta 2 in

Makati City that killed 11 people and injured over a hundred others.

Sen. Gregorio Honasan, chair of the committee, has sat on Trillanes' petition.

Trillanes, who has yet to leave his detention cell and attend his first Senate session, claimed that he received information implicating National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales and Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon in the Glorietta 2 blast just hours after the bloody incident.

The police, backed by international experts, said the blast

was more likely caused by the buildup of gases in the mall's basement due to a damaged sewage system. But Trillanes has stood pat on his claim and said he was ready to present his witness in a Senate hearing.

Investigators, meanwhile, have yet to submit a final report on the Glorietta blast.

2-3 weeks more

In a press conference yesterday, metropolitan police chief Geary Barias said he needed at least two to three weeks more to finish his investigation.

He said investigators were examining the air vents in the basement of the mall that led to other parts of the building to possibly explain the extensive damage.

At the same time, the National Bureau of Investigation yesterday started examining pieces of evidence it had gathered from the blast site.

Among the evidence recovered from the mall basement were five submersible pumps

and circuit breakers, motors and other electrical devices.

Before taking them away for tests, the NBI inspected the evidence in front of members of the media and representatives of Ayala Land Inc., owner of the mall, who attested to the authenticity of the items.

Senior Supt. Felimor Jaudian, chief investigator of the Inter-Agency Anti-Arson Task Force (IAATF), said two of the submersible pumps appeared clogged and four were uncovered.

"There were indications that the system could have been clogged but further tests are still necessary to really determine that," Jaudian told reporters.

Jaudian said the submersible pumps were "material" to the analysis of how the gases had ignited.

Barias added that the task force's analysis of the air vents also aims to find out "if there was a bomb that was in-

volved there."

He said the IAATF report was expected within the week but again stressed that this was not the final report.

No charges yet

Barias also denied a report in a major daily that the Department of Justice was set to file charges against the mall owner.

"The filing of the case is premised on the final outcome of the investigation. Whatever is the outcome of the investigation, the DOJ will have to assess what legal moves to take," Barias said.

Barias was supposed to present a significant progress yesterday but said the investigation was delayed because of the work on the air vents.

IAATF has contested the gas build-up hypothesis of the police, saying there was nothing wrong with the sewage system of the mall. It urged police to look for other angles in their investigation. With a report from Alcinc Papa

Opposition snubs hearing that junked impeachment case

By TJ Burgonio

IN A CONTINUING PROTEST, OPPOSITION congressmen yesterday boycotted a meeting of the House committee on justice that went on to dismiss the impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We're going to boycott it. We don't have anything to do with it," Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez said in a phone interview before the meeting.

Paranaque City Rep. Roilo Golez, who attended the hearing of another committee, agreed: "We're not interested in the impeachment. That's the majority's party."

Rodriguez and Golez are among the six opposition members of the justice committee.

Minutes after convening, the members of the justice committee, chaired by Quezon City Rep. Matias Defensor,

unanimously approved the committee report finding the impeachment complaint filed by lawyer Roel Pulido "insufficient in substance."

Laguna Rep. Edgar San Luis, who endorsed the Pulido complaint, dissented but left before the committee approved its finding.

"It's immaterial [if the oppositors were not around]," Defensor told reporters, pointing out that an absolute majority of the 55-member committee was sufficient to approve the report.

"If they're not going to participate in the plenary, what can we do? It's going to be submitted to the plenary just the same."

The committee report was set to be transmitted to the committee on rules last night, which would calendar it for business in the plenary.

The committee on Wednesday last week had declared the Pulido

complaint insufficient in substance and voted 43 to 1 to junk it, virtually giving the President a one-year immunity from impeachment.

Under the Constitution, only one impeachment complaint can be filed against an impeachable official a year.

Pulido's complaint centered on charges of corruption surrounding the controversial \$329-million National Broadband Network project of the government and the Chinese firm ZTE Corp, among others.

Rodriguez said the 30-member minority would manifest its protest against the dismissal of an addendum to the complaint filed by lawyer Adel Tamano, but would not take part in the vote on the committee report in the plenary.

"I don't see 80 brave souls to go against this. First of all, the complaint is weak and a sham. I don't think we will vote for its reversal," he said.

Sedfrey Ordoñez, lawyer, poet, ambassador to UN, dies at 86

FORMER JUSTICE SECRETARY and former United Nations Ambassador Sedfrey Ordoñez passed away Sunday afternoon at the Makati Medical Center weeks after suffering a stroke. He was 86.

He is survived by his spouse, Josefina, and children, Roberto, Philip, Cristina and Helen. His remains lie in state at the Sanctuarium on Araneta Avenue in Quezon City. Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City on Nov. 22.

Ordoñez, who in January 1999 was appointed general counsel of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, was born on Sept. 1, 1921. He was justice secretary when the Philippine government suggested a barter deal to settle a multibillion-dollar damage suit against the Westinghouse Electric Corp. for the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant that was mothballed by the Aquino administration.

Con-con delegate

He represented the second district of his province, Nueva Ecija, as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1970.

Under the Aquino administration, he assumed the position of so-

licitor general in 1986 and justice secretary from 1987 to 1989. He also served as chair of the Presidential Committee on the Philippine Nuclear Power Plant.

In 1987, he briefly served as chair of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

From 1990 to 1992, he served as Philippine ambassador to the United Nations.

He also served as chair of the Commission on Human Rights from 1992 to 1995 and was Construction Industry Administration commissioner in 1999.

He served at the Unesco Conciliation and Good Offices Commission from 1977 to 1983. In 2000, he sat as adviser of the Advisory Commission of Jurists in the Asia Pacific Forum held in Rotorua, New Jersey.

Ordoñez attended the college of liberal arts and the college of law of the University of the Philippines in 1940-1941. He earned his law degree in 1948 at the Manuel L. Quezon University and his master's in law from the Philippine Law School in 1954.

He also attended the Ateneo University graduate school of business from 1973 to 1974.

Ordoñez was managing partner of the Salonga, Ordoñez and Yap Law Office from 1953 to 1986 and was a lecturer of remedial law from 1950 to 1986 at various universities.

He also served as chair of the Philippine Dispute Resolution Center from 1996 until his demise and was a professional arbitrator of the Philippine Institute of Construction Arbitrators.

Bilingual

Ordoñez was also a bilingual poet. His published works include "Wounded Pearls" (Mga Sugatang Perlas), a three-act play set to music as opera and performed at the New York City Town Hall in April 1992; "Siklay sa Kabila ng Paalam," a three-act play set to music by Dr. Francisco Feliciano and performed as music-drama; the lyrics of "Heroique," set to music by Jeffrey Ching and performed in Makati City 1991; "Pag-Ibig" lyrics, set to music by Dr. Lucinda Kaslag, National Artist, and performed in 1994 in Quezon City; "Arayat Cabiao," a book of poems and plays in English and Filipino; "Nuclear Poems," a collection of poems in Filipino, published in 1997, and "Life Cycle: 50 years in Law and Letters," published in 1999. Inquirer Research

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Docs reinsert tube in Saguisag's airway

By DJ Yap

FORMER SEN. RENE SAGUISAG was back to writing notes to his family yesterday after doctors reinserted the breathing tube in his airway after he experienced difficulty breathing without a respirator.

Two more procedures were scheduled to be performed on him yesterday: The replacement of the chest tube that drained fluids from his left lung and the insertion of a caval filter to remove the blood clots in his lower extremities.

Otherwise, he remained in stable condition, according to Dr. Victor Alvarez, the neurosurgeon who heads the team of specialists monitoring Saguisag's condition.

The doctor, however, said the preventive procedures, which were not life-threatening, meant that the former senator might have to stay in the intensive care unit "for a while."

Alvarez said doctors would also perform a tracheostomy on Saguisag to help him breathe easier.

"Instead of [the tube] passing through the mouth to the lungs,

it will be transferred from the neck to the lungs," he said.

"The main advantage of this is that it will be easier to remove the secretions and it will help save his vocal chords."

The breathing tube was removed from Saguisag's airway last Friday and was reinserted on Sunday.

As for Felipe Calvario, Saguisag's driver, Dr. Eric Nubla, chief of the hospital's patient relations office, said he remained in stable condition.

"Regarding Calvario, we are not having problems with his respiration. The only thing that's keeping him in the hospital is that he hasn't awakened completely. He has opened his eyes but he doesn't recognize people," Alvarez said.

Saguisag's son Rebo told the media that his father did not wish to make any statement at present.

Rebo said the family had not shown Saguisag the video of his wife Dulce's funeral last Friday.

"Our decision is to wait for him to ask for it because we don't want to unduly jeopardize his emotional state," he said.

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World Bank defers RP loan, probes graft

From page A1
large road contracts in three successive rounds of bidding because of strong signs of collusion and excessive pricing," Adams said.

He said a World Bank team and other stakeholders reported the irregularities to the bank's internal investigation unit—the Department of Institutional Integrity (INT)—which, in turn, launched an investigation.

The World Bank governing board's postponement of a decision on the loan is unusual and is the first project involving corruption issues to reach the board since Robert Zoellick became president in July, replacing Paul Wolfowitz, who resigned after an ethics scandal.

Corruption is a major problem in the Philippines, particularly when large infrastructure problems are up for grabs.

Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos last month resigned his post following allegations of bribery in the \$329-million National Broadband Network deal with the Chinese telecommunications firm ZTE Corp. which he supposedly brokered. Abalos has denied any wrongdoing.

Another Chinese firm

The World Bank statement did not identify what companies were involved in the alleged bid rigging.

Citing World Bank officials, the Wall Street Journal said the firm China State Construction

Engineering, which won a \$6.2-million contract for road maintenance in the Philippines in 2002, tried to rig bids with a cartel of construction firms in later bidding rounds.

No one from China State Construction Engineering, a state-owned company based in Beijing, was immediately available for comment, according to a Reuters report.

The Wall Street Journal described China State Construction as one of the world's largest construction firms.

It said the firm started a Philippine subsidiary in 1989 and had been involved in at least 16 projects in the country.

A matter of timing

"It was more an issue of timing than anything else. The board had questions about what had been done to strengthen this project," said World Bank spokesperson Peter Stephens.

He said board members wanted to read a report into the first phase of the project (2000-2007) by the bank's internal investigation unit, whose findings were published on the same day phase two went for approval to the board.

Stephens said the World Bank's Philippine office and the Philippine government had drawn up anticorruption measures for the second phase of the project.

"We worked with the government and civil society groups and we put in place a number of pretty tough anticorruption measures and this is part of the second

IN THE KNOW

World Bank project

PHASE 1 OF THE NATIONAL Roads Improvement and Management Program (NRIMP), implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways, originally aimed to upgrade about 530 kilometers of national roads and carry out maintenance work on about 230 km of national roads.

Included in the project were:

- La Trinidad-Mount Data section of Halsema Highway in Benguet
- Buug-Kabasalan section of Zamboanga City-Pagadian Road in Zamboanga del Sur
- Calinan-Buda section of Davao-Bukidnon Road in Davao City
- Various sections of Suri-gao-Davao Coastal Road in Mindanao
- Sulop-Malita section of Malalag-Jose Abad Santos Road in Davao del Sur
- Hinobaan-Basay section of Kabankalan-Basay Road in

phase which is why the second phase was, in our view, able to be put to the board," Stephens said.

The measures incorporated in the project design included:

- An independent procurement assessment and technical audit that strengthens transparency of the bidding process.
- Enhanced processes for procurement, financial management, internal controls and audits of the road management agencies.
- Inclusion of a new and innovative coalition of citizen and road user groups, called "Road Watch"

Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental

- a section of Maramag-Kibawe Road in Bukidnon
- Buda-Maramag section of Davao-Bukidnon Road in Bukidnon

Since 2000, about 382 km of roads had been built or upgraded, while 975 km had been maintained.

The total project cost was \$305 million, almost half of which was financed by a World Bank loan. The World Bank approved a \$150-million loan to the Philippine finance department on Feb. 15, 2000.

By the time it stopped funding the road project on March 31, 2007, the World Bank had released over \$138 million in loans.

The second phase of the program has a total cost pegged at \$574 million. The World Bank is among the proposed funding sources for the project. Cyril L. Bonabente, *Inquirer Research*

in the project management setup.

A civil society-led "Road Watch" group was envisioned to be created to monitor project implementation and procurement and issue periodic report cards on the performance of the road sector.

"With the INT report now completed, the discussion of the phase two project at the board has been deferred until the government and the board members receive the information they have requested," the bank said.

The World Bank said 382 kilometers of roads had been built or upgraded across the Philippines in the first phase of the project and 975 km of existing roads had been resurfaced and maintained across the archipelago, where a dilapidated transport network hinders development.

Other World Bank sources said the board decided to suspend discussions on the phase two of the project "until an internal review of the project is done and finalized."

For its part, the Philippine government was also seeking access to the INT report for its own review, the sources said.

They added that since the irregularities involved collusion, no single contractor should be pinned down.

The complete list of contractors hired for all projects were listed on the World Bank website.

\$150-M for phase I

The Philippine project is officially called the National Roads Improvement and Management Program (NRIMP).

Adams said the NRIMP was the Philippine government's main tool for upgrading the country's road management through stronger business processes and reformed institutions for financing and managing roads.

He said that during the first phase of the program, the government made major progress toward putting in place a modern, transparent and accountable national road management system.

"Some 90 percent of the project goals were achieved ... As a result, people throughout the Philippines have benefited through a more efficient and transparent road system, improved access to social services, lower transport costs and reduced traveling times," he said.

Adams said the World Bank would continue to support the Philippines and remain actively engaged with government and civil society on strengthening governance and fighting corruption.

The government and World Bank Philippines were planning to conclude discussions on the second phase of NRIMP last June.

Under NRIMP-2, about 700 km of national highways were supposed to be rehabilitated and upgraded and preventive maintenance undertaken for about 2,000 km.

NRIMP-1 was approved by the World Bank under a 20-year loan agreement in 2000. The bank initially disbursed \$150 million for the first phase.

With a report from Reuters

Malacañang denies talk of corruption

From page A1

Ebdane said the World Bank deferred discussions on approval of Phase 2 of the National Road Improvement and Management Program (NRIMP) "citing procurement problems which led to the declaration of the failed bids for three different projects."

Ebdane said he promptly ordered an inquiry into the three

failed bids cited in the World Bank report.

"Given the precedents in relation to the three bids, I decided to cancel the bidding to remove the source of the problem," said Ebdane. But in order to continue the projects, he said he had requested President Macapagal-Arroyo "for possible local funding for the three projects."

sues to be resolved was compliance to the approved budget ceiling (ABC) as required by the World Bank.

Each of the three bids in question was above the ABC, which led to the eventual declaration of failed bidding, said Ebdane.

But he noted the same bank

also recently approved a project with a bid amount exceeding the ABC.

"We must be very clear about the criteria and apply the criteria equally and consistently for our objective of reforming the road management system to really be effective," Ebdane said.

Remonde said the NRIMP II had a budget of P6 billion to rehabilitate national roads in

north Luzon (234 km), south Luzon (221 km), Mindanao (201 km), Mindoro (102 km), Negros (119 km) and Panay (225 km).

Remonde said Ms Arroyo created the Pro-Performance Infrastructure Monitoring Group to precisely "ensure the transparency and efficiency of road and other infrastructure projects."

8 SBMA execs face raps over 'hot' cars

From page A1

a PAGC source said when asked for confirmation. The source declined to be identified, citing the confidentiality of the work of the agency.

PAGC Chair Constancia de Guzman declined an interview on Monday.

Hidemitsu imports

In the PAGC's protocol, formal charges are recommended when the agency has found probable cause for the filing of criminal or administrative complaints against presidential appointees.

At the core of the case is the smuggling of 16 of 24 mostly

new luxury cars imported by Hidemitsu Trading Corp., a locator at the freeport. The cars were admitted to the port on Sept. 27, Oct. 5 and Oct. 6 last year, and taken out without year passes in February.

The case findings were based on the consolidated reviews done by the BOC and the PAGC, the SBMA source said. The government lost P6 million in that single smuggling incident, the agency reported.

"The case is weak. It did not recommend charges against the smugglers, not even naming John Doe as conspirators," the source said.

"This is Morales' work," the

same source said, referring to Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales as the one who hatched the case. "They were made the sacrificial lambs in [the BOC's] antismuggling campaign."

But Morales, in a text message to the Inquirer, denied that he was behind the recommendation. "No, that's wrong. [The] PAGC is an independent agency," he said.

Without SBMA control?

Arreza said he, Calimlim and Pascual "maintain our stand that the smuggling happened without SBMA knowledge and control."

"We were not a party to the undervaluation of taxes or registration of cars with the [Land Transportation Office]," Arreza said in a phone interview.

Aside from disclosing the full details of the Hidemitsu case in a March 15, 2007, report to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the SBMA chair said he issued a seizure order on the smuggled cars.

Calimlim had reported recovering the cars in Angeles City and Quezon City in March.

Alonso Dominguez, Hidemitsu president, said his South Korean partners took out the cars without his authority.

Zamorano said she was "not

yet around when the transactions were consummated," noting that she assumed her post on Nov. 14, 2006.

"I am not a presidential appointee so the PAGC has no jurisdiction over me," she said.

Zamora declined to name the four other BOC officials.

Respondents' positions

Arreza said Ermita's office had required the respondents to submit their positions in 10 days. The customs officials will also submit their answers, said Zamorano.

A businessman, who used to smuggle out cars in Subic, said between 3,000 and 5,000 vehicles

were being taken out of Subic yearly without proper documents and correct taxes through the connivance of the SBMA, BOC and LTO officials.

A Malacafang source, who asked not to be named because he was not authorized to talk about the issue, said the full report of the PAGC had been submitted to Ermita last week.

The respondents will be required to file affidavits to give them a chance to rebut the PAGC's findings. Based on the answers, Ermita may either reverse or affirm the findings, and file a case with the Office of the Ombudsman.

Only 25% keen to oust corrupt RP president

Sufficient level for a president to resign from office (October 20-31, 2007)

Location	RP
If there is strong evidence that he/she or a member of his/her family is involved in graft and corruption	34
The linking of his/her own name in an investigation of graft and corruption	2
The linking of the name of even only one member of his/her family to an investigation of graft and corruption	19
A president's tolerating graft and corruption among government officials	18
None of those mentioned	7

Q: In your opinion, which level is sufficient for a president to resign from office?

Location	RP
Jose "Joey" De Venecia III	22
Benjamin Abalos	12
Romulo Neri	8
They're all equally not believable	58
Don't know	0

*BASED ON THE ALLEGATION OF BRIEFS REGARDING ZTE DEAL, 70% SOURCE: PULSE ASIA INC.

From page A1

multistage probability sample of 1,200 representative adults. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Issues dominating the headlines at the time of the survey included the cash handouts in Malacañang, renewed calls for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo and the planned revival of impeachment complaints against her; the explosion at the Glorietta 2 mall, the rift between Ms Arroyo and House Speaker Jose de Venecia, the controversial ZTE deal, and the granting of pardon to deposed President Joseph Estrada.

The survey, undertaken by Pulse Asia on its own, asked respondents what they considered to be "sufficient reasons" for a president's resignation. Twenty-two percent cited the president being linked to corruption, while 19 percent said a member of his/her family being implicated. Eighteen percent said a president tolerating graft was sufficient reason for his/her resignation.

One in every three Filipinos (34 percent), on the other hand, thought there should be "strong evidence of involvement in graft and corruption" of the president or his/her family.

What will respondents do?

When asked what steps they were willing to take to have a president removed from or forced out of office, only one of four respondents (25 percent) said they were willing

to go "beyond public rallies and marches," or "do whatever is necessary to have a president resign or be removed from office."

Such a sentiment was most notable in the Visayas (34 percent) and least pronounced in Metro Manila (21 percent).

"What most Filipinos (61 percent) are willing to do is sign public petitions advocating the resignation or the removal from office of a president," Pulse Asia said in a statement.

This preference for signing petitions was shared by "near to big majorities" (47-78 percent) across all geographic areas and socioeconomic groups.

Ready to join rallies

On the other hand, 26 percent of respondents said they were ready to join public rallies or marches, while 27 percent said they were willing to speak out in such events. Nearly one in every three (28 percent) said they would discuss the issue with friends and acquaintances.

Pulse Asia also noted that the preference for discussing the issue with friends was most pronounced in Mindanao (3

Party-list lawmaker denies hand in Batasan blast

By TJ Burgoño

ANAK MINDANAO PARTY-LIST
Rep. Mujiv Hataman yesterday denied he masterminded the Batasang Pambansa bombing and decried attempts to link him to the killing of Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar.

Hataman's denial came hours after Speaker Jose de Venecia and Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. met with Police Director General Avelino Razon to map out new security measures for both chambers.

One of the measures being eyed is the adoption of a security force similar to the US Capitol Police Force in Wash-

ington.

Shortly after the session started, Hataman took to the floor and delivered an emotional privilege speech, where he denied that he had ever employed Ikram Indama, one of the three detained suspects.

"It's easy to check this lie. The records are all in the House of Representatives," he said.

Hataman said he knew Indama to be a driver of former Deputy Speaker for Mindanao Gerry Salapuddin, but got to know his name only when it was flashed on TV days ago.

"According to reports, I've been named by Ikram Indama as a mastermind, along with

Representative Salapuddin. I don't know what's the basis for this, and if this is sufficient for the authorities to believe him," he said.

Unfazed

"But I remain unfazed and without fear because my conscience is clear. As long as the investigation is thorough and impartial, I'm hopeful that the truth will come out and eventually clear my name," Hataman said.

He denounced statements by Lantawan Mayor Tahira Ismael, Akbar's niece, linking him to the latter's killing.

"But to pinpoint me and sin-

gle me out as one of the suspects in public is the biggest of all the injustices they have done to me in the last 10 years of my life," he said.

Hataman said he idolized and campaigned for Akbar, when he ran for governor in 1998 on a platform of a graft-free, progressive and peaceful society, and then served as his executive secretary during his two terms.

Cracks in relationship

"Modesty aside, I was with him when he first ran for public office without a machinery, and when he faced arrest for his involvement with the Abu

Sayyaf," Hataman said.

Cracks in their relationship began to show only in 2002 when Hataman, as a human rights advocate, opposed the local government's crackdown on suspected Abu Sayyaf members, the congressman said.

On top of this, people from Basilan started trooping to his office at the House to complain about corruption, election fraud, illegal logging, among other things, during Akbar's watch, he added.

"In all these instances, never was there a moment of violence between us, or our families," Hataman said.

PNP: Bombing planned in ex-solon's store

From page A1

ed attack on the House of Representatives after their names cropped up in the police investigation.

PNP Director General Avelino Razon yesterday told the Inquirer that the identities of those who gave the assassination order were provided by the detained suspects, but he declined to elaborate. "They are not considered the masterminds," Razon said.

Barias said other personalities were being looked at and that investigators were attempting to confirm if the suspects were members of the Abu Sayyaf.

On Sunday, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita ruled out any participation by Salapuddin, a former commander of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), in the assassination, calling him an "honorable man." Ermita helped negotiate Salapuddin's surrender to the government in 1984.

Named in the complaint for

murder and frustrated murder were Caidar Aunal, 41; Ikram Indama, 35, and Adham Kusain, 21.

The three men were arrested following a gun battle at Barangay Payatas near the Batasan complex in Quezon City two days after the bombing. Killed in the fire fight were Abu Jandal, an alleged member of the Abu Sayyaf kidnap gang, and Redwan Indiana and his wife Saling.

Preliminary investigation

Police were serving an arrest warrant on Jandal for kidnapping when the gun battle broke out.

Senior State Prosecutor Peter Ong said a preliminary investigation would be held on Nov. 29 at the justice department, following which formal charges would be brought against the suspects if warranted.

Also charged were Benjamin Hataman, alias Jang, who was at large and was identified as a staff member of Congressman

Hataman, two identified only as John and Mike Doe, and the three killed in the Payatas raid.

In his letter-complaint, Senior Supt. Asher Dolina said Indama had admitted to his involvement in the bombing that was meant to kill Akbar and had disclosed that the plan was hatched in Salapuddin's Greenbucks grocery.

Indama, previously identified as Salapuddin's former driver from whom a House of Representatives ID was seized along with a congressman's No. 8 car plate, was also given P10,000 by Redwan for his expenses, Dolina said.

Motorcycle bomb

According to Dolina, Indama said that he brought the motorcycle armed with the bomb to the Batasan on Nov. 12 to carry out the assassination. However, he was told by Benjamin Hataman that Akbar would not come that day.

The next day, Indama went back to the Batasan complex.

At 4 p.m., he parked the motorcycle at the left side of the south wing lobby, went to the cashier and then stayed in the lobby where he received a text message from Benjamin Hata-

man.

The bomb was electronically detonated by cell phone at the south wing of the Batasan complex, police previously said.

Indama also named his cousin Redwan and his wife Saling, Benjamin Hataman, Jandal and Aunal, whom he said was Salapuddin's brother-in-law, as among those who planned the bombing, the complaint said.

Jilbert Ortega, chief of the Complaints and Investigation Unit of the House of Representatives, said he saw Indama at the south wing on Nov. 13, according to Dolina.

Salapuddin house

Kusain said in his affidavit that he lived in the Quezon City house of Salapuddin when he arrived in Manila in March 2005 up to the present. He said

Salapuddin was a friend of his father Ahmad.

Salapuddin also owned the Quezon City house where suspect Indama lived, Dolima said.

Airport attendant

Kusain said Salapuddin had sent him to school for one year, where he took up Computer Science, and later got him a job as a building attendant at the Centennial Terminal 2 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Kusain owned the motorcycle that was allegedly used in the bombing. He also said in his statement that Redwan took his motorcycle for an important matter, and was promised P50,000 or a new motorcycle in return.

He said he asked why the motorcycle was being taken, but was only told it would be used for something. On Nov. 15, the day of the police raid on Redwan's home, he said he was there to wait for the payment for his motorcycle when police

barged in and the gun battle broke out.

Kusain also said he only learned that his motorcycle was the one used in the bombing after the raid. He also said that as far as he knew, Redwan was a former MNLF guerrilla.

Abu Sayyaf role

Akbar's niece, Tahira Ismael, said in an interview before the filing of the complaint that she believed the Abu Sayyaf was behind the blast. She said her uncle, a former Abu Sayyaf member who later supported a government crackdown against the bandit group, had received threats through text messages even before the barangay election last month.

She also said one of the suspects, Indama, was a relative of an Abu Sayyaf commander in Basilan who allegedly spearheaded the beheading of members of the Philippine Marines. With a report from Alcuin Papa

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PALL MALL TAX CLASSIFICATION AN APPEAL FOR FAIRNESS

The issue of the tax classification of British American Tobacco's (BAT) cigarette brand Pall Mall continues to be the subject of contention. Despite a Department of Finance (DOF) ruling last July 24, 2007 which affirms the final excise tax rate of P6.74 per pack – the same as other mid-price cigarette brands in the country – Pall Mall continues to labor under an environment of uncertainty.

When we introduced Pall Mall in the Philippine market in August 2004, we did so with a strong belief that we would do business on a level playing field. Fair competition, a principle which the Philippine government adheres to, and in fact actively encourages and endorses, was a commitment and a pledge made to foreign investors.

Today, these are all being put to a severe test. The tax classification of Pall Mall is being challenged by our competitors despite the clarity of the tax laws and regulations. There are efforts to mislead the public regarding these issues.

WHY P6.74 IS THE CORRECT TAX RATE

La Suerte, BAT's licensee in the Philippines, has been paying an excise tax rate of P5.60 per pack (now P6.74 per pack) for Pall Mall since its introduction in August 2004. This is based on the net retail price as stated in the manufacturer's declaration. Pall Mall, being a mid-price brand, is subject to an excise tax of P6.74 per pack, the same as all other brands in this price bracket.

The law provides for a defined process for the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) to validate and then revalidate the net retail price through price surveys, and based on this, to determine the final excise tax classification. The first price survey is to be conducted three months from product launch. The second price survey is to be conducted 18 months thereafter for revalidation. The BIR is then required by law to issue the final excise tax classification based on the results of these surveys.

The BIR did not conduct the requisite price surveys within the prescribed periods. The law clearly stipulates that if the BIR fails to conduct the requisite price surveys, the proper tax classification shall be based on the net retail price as stated in the manufacturer's declaration. On this basis alone, Pall Mall should have been granted its final excise classification as a mid-price brand, at a resultant excise rate of P6.74 per pack.

The BIR finally conducted a price survey on December 22, 2006, but only after it was directed by the DOF to do so. This is 28 months after Pall Mall was introduced into the local market.

The BIR's belated price survey showed that Pall Mall was indeed priced within the mid-price segment with an actual gross retail price of P14.00 per pack. This was further confirmed by an independent price survey carried out simultaneously by AC Nielsen in 133 stores in Metro Manila.

Again, despite the very clear results of the price survey – results that validated the tax classification of P6.74 per pack – former Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag failed to render the proper and logical resolution of the matter. Disregarding the results of his own survey, Commissioner Buñag issued on February 22, 2007 a ruling classifying Pall Mall at the premium segment with an applicable tax rate of P26.06 per pack, almost twice Pall Mall's retail price of P14.00 per pack!

DUTY FREE EXCISE RATE IS NOT APPLICABLE

Why? Commissioner Buñag classified Pall Mall at the premium segment on the sole basis of the rate paid by Duty Free Philippines (DFP) when it imported Pall Mall for sale in its outlets in December 2004, or five months after the locally manufactured Pall Mall had already been introduced into the domestic market.

Again, the public is being misled by erroneous statements and unfounded allegations regarding Pall Mall's entry into the Philippine market. There is absolutely no truth to allegations that imported Pall Mall sold at Duty Free Philippines shops were introduced ahead of the local Pall Mall brand. Local Pall Mall was introduced in August 2004, and Duty Free Philippines began importing Pall Mall in December 2004.

Curiously, Commissioner Buñag appeared to have backtracked when, in his letter to the DOF dated June 13, 2007, he admitted that "based on the results of the price survey on (Pall Mall) and its variants conducted last December 22, 2006,

the respective average net retail prices thereof, excluding the value added and excise taxes, is P6.15 per pack with the applicable (excise) tax rate of P6.35 (now P6.74)."

NO DOWNDOWN CLASSIFICATION = NO LOSS OF GOVERNMENT REVENUE

Even the question of downward tax classification, for which BAT and La Suerte have been criticized and put to task, should have been a non-issue. Downward classification presumes that a brand has been finally classified, and that subsequent introductions of the same brand can not have a lower rate than that which has already been established. But as stated, the local Pall Mall was introduced ahead of the Duty Free Pall Mall. And furthermore, there was never a final classification for Pall Mall until the DOF issued its July 24, 2007 decision. Since there is no downward classification in the Pall Mall case, the related allegation of government loss of revenue if the P6.74 rate is enforced is simply not true.

FAIR COMPETITION : WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT

If the BIR had its way, and its February 22, 2007 ruling is enforced, Pall Mall would be the only locally-manufactured brand that would be paying the highest excise rate of P26.06 per pack.

We believe this is not what fair competition is all about. We believe our competitors are over-reacting to our entry into the local market. The misinformation that prevails today over issues like proper tax classification, downward classification and a level playing field for all continue to stunt the growth of foreign investors like BAT. We seek only fairness, and a chance to grow the company, providing jobs and business opportunities for Filipinos. We do not seek preferential treatment, nor do we expect any. What we seek is the proper application of the law to all.

We wonder, for instance, why the BIR insists on a tax classification of P26.06 per pack for Pall Mall when it had already validated the brand's retail price at P14.00? Hope and Winston have a retail price of P23.00 – higher than Pall Mall's – and yet these brands are taxed at P6.74 per pack!

As for taxing the same locally-made brands and Duty Free brands differently, this is nothing unusual. All Duty Free cigarettes are taxed at the highest tax bracket. Marlboro and Philip Morris 100's have a Duty Free Philippines tax rate of P26.06 per pack (premium brand) and yet their local tax rate is only P10.88 (high-price brand). Winston has a Duty Free Philippines tax rate of P26.06 per pack (premium brand) and yet its local tax rate is only P6.74 per pack!

So why must Pall Mall be any different? *Hindi patas ang laban.*

When BAT entered the Philippine market in August 2004, it did so with a vision of growth and expansion. We remain focused on our goal despite the challenges that have been thrown our way, and we remain hopeful that in the end, fairness and equality will rule the day.

Answer writ filed by moms, court orders AFP officer

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS DIRECTED A military officer to respond to a petition for a writ of amparo filed by two mothers seeking freedom for their sons who were allegedly abducted in Quezon province.

The high court issued its fifth writ of amparo on Friday in response to a petition filed by Leny Panganiban and Maria Ortiz.

Under the writ of amparo, the Armed Forces of the Philippines or the Philippine National Police cannot simply deny involvement in abductions or extrajudicial killings. They must also prove they are not involved and, on court order, open their detention facilities for inspection.

Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said Lt. Col. Ramon Telko was directed to file his return to the writ of amparo before the Court of Appeals by Nov. 21.

The respondent should state in his return the action he has taken, his defense, and the action he will take.

A hearing has been set for Nov. 23 for the petition of the mothers who asked that their children, Jeffrey Panganiban and Juvy Ortiz, be released after they were allegedly arrested last month and taken to the 76th Infantry Battalion camp in Quezon.

Jeffrey and Juvy were reportedly suspected of being members of the communist New People's Army.

Hurt by captors

Juvi supposedly told relatives who visited him at the camp that they were hurt by their captors.

The mothers said that since no charges had been brought against their sons they should be released. They also asked for an inspection order for the camp.

The Court of Appeals was set to hold yesterday its first hearing on the petition for a writ of amparo filed by activist Leny Robino seeking the release of her brother Romulo, who was allegedly abducted by the military in exchange for Leny's surrender.

In the petition filed by Leny and her mother Lolita, they asked that the military be directed to release Romulo and Ryan Supang and for the military to stop harassing all four of them.

"The Robinos also asked for an inspection order for military detachments and safe-houses, including the house used by retired Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr. at Clark Air Base.

Ruel Mufasque is the first known case of a detainee released since the Supreme Court introduced the writ of amparo on Oct. 24 to stem the tide of extrajudicial killings and "forced disappearances" in the country.

Mufasque is a Bayan Muna organizer and a leader of the Christian Youth Fellowship-United Church of Christ in the Philippines. He walked home a free man on Nov. 7, the same day the Pagadian City Regional Trial Court granted his petition for a writ of amparo.

DOLE belays order lifting OFW ban to war-torn countries

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT yesterday put on hold its latest order partially lifting the deployment ban to Afghanistan, Nigeria and Lebanon of Filipino workers, saying there were renewed security concerns in those countries.

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion said he told the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) to hold the implementation of Department Order No. 86-7, which was signed on Nov. 15.

The recruitment industry expressed dismay at this latest development and criticized the DOLE for recalling a department order without a valid reason.

But Brion said the security situation in those countries "could not be taken lightly." In a phone interview with the Inquirer, he said there had been recent problems with the peace and order situation in Afghanistan and Nigeria, for example.

"I am not receding the department order. We are just doing whatever is necessary for the welfare of our overseas workers," Brion said.

"The department order would have opened the door to thousands of Filipinos who want to work in bases of the US-led coalition in Afghanistan, the International Red Cross, the Red Crescent and other UN-related organizations involved in reconstruction and development," said Emmanuel Geslani, consultant to a number of recruitment agencies in the country.

It would also allow the deployment of Filipinos to Nigeria, especially near the cities. In cases where the job site is in the troubled Niger Delta, would have to study the applications on a case-to-case basis.

In Lebanon's case, Geslani said, household service workers would finally be allowed to depart under the new \$400-minimum-salary policy.

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Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project with single contract of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conferences, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
Issuance of Bid Documents	Start on November 16, 2007 (Friday), 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Submission of Letter of Intent	On or before November 21, 2007 (Wednesday), 5:00 PM
Pre Bid Conference	9:00 AM, November 22, 2007 (Thursday)
Submission of Bids	On or before December 3, 2007 (Monday), 5:00 PM
Opening of Bids	December 4, 2007 (Monday) 9:00 AM

Sealed proposals should be submitted to the UP System Supply and Property Management Office, Quezon Hall (Oblation Plaza), UP Diliman, Quezon City.

Bid documents will be available from the UP System SPMO to bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of PhP 12,000.00 for bid documents and PhP 500.00 for membership (first time bidders). Contact person : Mr. Isagani L. Bagus, Officer-in-Charge, UP System SPMO, Telefax: 926-4919.

The University of the Philippines System reserves the right to reject any or all bids as well as waive any defect or informality required in such bids, and to accept such bid as may be considered most advantageous to the University.

(Sgd.) Professor ARIEL S. BETAN
Assistant Vice President for Administration and Chair, UP System Bids and Awards Committee

(POI - November 26, 2007)

WESTERN VISAYAS MEDICAL CENTER

Mandurio, Iloilo City

Fax No. 321-17-07

Email Address: info@wvc.org.ph

Project Reference Number: 2007-003

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The DOH-Western Visayas Medical Center through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following:

Name of Project : Procurement of one (1) unit brand new diagnostic color ultrasound scanner
Location : Western Visayas Medical Center
Brief Description : The Bidder shall provide the delivery of the one (1) unit brand new diagnostic color ultrasound scanner

Approved Budget For the Contract : PhP 7,000,000.00

Delivery Duration : 24 months

Delivery Period : Within 30 days from date of award

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last five years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	November 22-23, 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	Dec. 3, 2007 - 2:00 p.m., Medical Center Chief Complex Upper Level
3. Submission of Letters of Intent and Application for Eligibility (If single-stage bidding is used, delete this activity)	NA
4. Opening of Bids	Dec. 17, 2007 - Medical Center Chief Complex Upper Level
5. Bid Evaluation	Dec. 18-20, 2007
6. Post-qualification	Dec. 21-31, 2007
7. Notice of Award	Jan. 2, 2008

Bid Documents will only be available upon payment of a non-refundable amount of PhP 2,000.00 in the Western Visayas Medical Center counter.

Further, The Western Visayas Medical Center assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the bid. Your participation to this project is highly appreciated.

(Sgd.) ESTHER J. MIEVALES
BAC - CHAIRMAN

For inquiries, please contact Angie or Ivy of the BAC Secretariat at (033) 321 1420.

(POI - Nov. 26, 2007)

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Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

The University of the Philippines System, Diliman, Quezon City, through its UP System Bids and Awards Committee (UPS BAC) invites all interested SUPPLIERS/BIDDERS to bid for the following:

Name of Project	Approved Budget for the Contract
One (1) Unit Optical Domin Reflectometer for Multimode (850nm, 1300nm) and Singlemode Fiber (1310nm, 1550nm)	PhP 2,100,000.00
One (1) Set - Optical Loss Test Kit	
One (1) Unit Multimode Light Source (850nm, 1300nm)	
One (1) Unit Singlemode Light (1310nm, 1550nm)	
One (1) Unit Power Meter	
One (1) Set Optic Maintenance Kit	
One (1) Set Fiber Cleaning Kit	
One (1) Set Fiber Tinning Kit	
One (1) Set Fiber Mechanical Splice Kit	
One (1) Los Fiber Connector (Singlemode) and Multimode ST, SC, MT-RJ and labels	
One (1) Unit Visual Fault Locator	
One (1) Unit Fiber Inspection Microscope (200X and 400X magnification)	

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project with single contract of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
Issuance of Bid Documents	Start on November 29, 2007 (Thursday), 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Pre Bid Conference	9:00 AM, November 26, 2007 (Monday)
Submission of Bids	On or before December 7, 2007 (Friday), 5:00 PM
Opening of Bids	December 10, 2007, (Monday) 9:00 AM

Sealed proposals should be submitted to the UP Systems Supply and Property Management Office, Quezon Hall (Oblation Plaza), UP Diliman, Quezon City.

Bid documents will be available from the UP System SPMO to bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of PhP 2,000.00 for bid documents and PhP 500.00 for membership (first time bidders). Contact person : Mr. Isagani L. Bagus, Officer-in-Charge, UP System SPMO, Telefax: 926-4919.

The University of the Philippines System reserves the right to reject any or all bids as well as waive any defect or informality required in such bids, and to accept such bid as may be considered most advantageous to the University.

(Sgd.) Professor ARIEL S. BETAN
Assistant Vice President for Administration and Chair, UP System Bids and Awards Committee

(POI - November 26, 2007)



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NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position	Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
CHINA NICKEL MINING PHILIPPINES CORPORATION Suite 212 State Condo IV Bldg., Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills, San Juan City	Meng Liang Chinese	Coordinator Staff	JAIMAAALAKSHMI LENDING & TRADING CORP. U-112-3A Balagtas Villas, Balagtas St., Pasay City	Gurpreet Kaur Indian	Technical Supervisor
PEOPLE ED LANGUAGE CENTER CORP. U-701,702,710 ALPAP II Bldg., Trade St., Madrigal Bus. Park, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Jeong Hwan Yu Korean	Operation Manager	JAIMAAALAKSHMI LENDING & TRADING CORP. U-112-3A Balagtas Villas, Balagtas St., Pasay City	Ramandeep Kaur Mahi Indian	Marketing Manager
PEOPLE ED LANGUAGE CENTER CORP. U-701,702,710 ALPAP II Bldg., Trade St., Madrigal Bus. Park, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Jinsu Park Korean	General Manager	RADOVIL TRADING LTD. CO. 1775 La Torre St., Binondo, Manila	Melhong Wang Chinese	Secretary
CELCRICA INTERNATIONAL, INC. 4374-A Dayap St., Palanan, Makati City	Kanghwa Lee Korean	Project Operator	RADOVIL TRADING LTD. CO. 1775 La Torre St., Binondo, Manila	Rongjie Cai Chinese	Consultant
CELCRICA INTERNATIONAL, INC. 4374-A Dayap St., Palanan, Makati City	Hana Han Canadian	Project Manager	KOK MING TRDG. LTD. CO. U707 550 Juan Luna Street, Makati City	Or Chit Hung Chinese	Manager
CELCRICA INTERNATIONAL, INC. 4374-A Dayap St., Palanan, Makati City	Sung Moon Kim Korean	Project Operator	CITIBANK, N.A. 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Valentin Pierre Wee American	Chief Operating Officer for Asia Pacific Business Process Solutions
CHINA GEO-ENGINEERING (PHIL.) CORPORATION 15 Mindanao St., Makati Baytown East, Aguirado Blvd., Parañaque City	Bing Cao Chinese	Head of Financial	XIAN ELECTRIC ENGINEERING COMPANY LIMITED Unit 1901,19F Raffles Corporate Center, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Yinghai Ma Chinese	General Manager/ Project Manager
BS POWERTEC PHILS., INC. Unit 3-D Classica 1, 112 H.V. Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Jonghyun Hong Korean	Manager	HENKEL ASIA PACIFIC SERVICE CENTRE 29th LKG Tower, 6801 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Dee Who Kim Korean	Accounting Specialist
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LTD. 21/F The Enterprise Center, Tower II, 5786 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Boon Yew Low Singaporean	Chinese-language Customer Service Officer	TOPMART IMPORT & EXPORT LTD. CO. 1089 Aguilar St., cor. C.M. Recto, Quiapo, Manila	Tianluo Li Chinese	Consultant
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LTD. 21/F The Enterprise Center, Tower II, 5786 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Cailian Zheng Chinese	Chinese-language Customer Service Officer	PHILSUN INTERNATIONAL IMPORT & EXPORT LTD. CO. 2020 Bambarra St., Binondo, Manila	Rongqi Fan Chinese	Consultant
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LTD. 21/F The Enterprise Center, Tower II, 5786 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Chee Siyong Pang Malaysian	Chinese-language Sports Trainer	COOL LYNX TRADING LTD. CO. 243 Tomas Mapua St., Makati City	Zongxiang Hou Chinese	Assistant Manager
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LTD. 21/F The Enterprise Center, Tower II, 5786 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Beng Pieu Loh Malaysian	Chinese-language Sports Trainer	SYKES ASIA INC. 26/F Robinsons Summit Center, 6783 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Jungok Uso Korean	Korean Client Support
OAKLEIGH CAPITAL LTD. 21/F The Enterprise Center, Tower II, 5786 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Non Chuen Fong Singaporean	Chinese-language Customer Service Officer	SYKES ASIA INC. 26/F Robinsons Summit Center, 6783 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Hyun Ju Lee Korean	Korean Client Support
LARSEN & TOUBRO INFOTECH LIMITED 24 & 27 Flrs., Tower 2, The Enterprise, 6786 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Aditya Arvind Thakurdesai Indian	Systems Analyst	YBM PNT INC. 28/F IBM Plaza, Eastwood City Cyberpark, Libis, Quezon City	■■■■■	Manager
LARSEN & TOUBRO INFOTECH LIMITED 24 & 27 Flrs., Tower 2, The Enterprise, 6786 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Vinod Krishna Chincholkar Indian	Systems Analyst	SITEL PHILIPPINES CORPORATION 21/F Taipan Place, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	David Roger Dupois Canadian	Director, Account Operations
XIAN ELECTRIC ENGINEERING COMPANY LIMITED U-1901 19F Raffles Corporate Center, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Xiao Li Chinese	Assistant General Manager	ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE CONSULTANTS INT'L. CORP. Suite 35 A/B Rufino Pacific Tower, 6784 Ayala Avenue cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City	Sathappan Selvheperan ■■■■■	Process Consultant
XIAN ELECTRIC ENGINEERING COMPANY LIMITED U-1901 19F Raffles Corporate Center, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Wei Liu Chinese	Finance Manager	EASTWEST CONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT INC. U108		

'Learning beyond 4 walls' launched

DepEd hopes to provide grads with 21st-century cyber skills

By Jerry E. Esplanada

STRESSING THE NEED FOR "ALTERNATIVE learning systems beyond the four walls of the classroom," Secretary Jesli A. Lapus yesterday launched the Department of Education's five-point information communications technology (ICT) agenda.

Speaking during Microsoft Corp.'s Education Summit at the Hotel Sofitel-Philippine Plaza, Lapus said the DepEd's ICT agenda focuses on the following areas:

- Learning goals and instructional design, which "define the agency's goal of producing graduates who have acquired 21st century skills and who can pass internationally benchmarked achievement exams, and at the same time underscores the need to systematically develop appropriate instructional materials and activities;"

- e-Services definition and usability standards, which "underscore the importance of defining the Internet-based services most suited for our particular education requirements;"

- Learning infrastructure and digital solutions, which "stress the need to define the infrastructure and digital solutions suited for our education requirements;"

- Open content and multimedia learning resources, which "look into the potential of social media content, as well as provide solutions to the pitfalls of such user-generated resources;"

- ICT competency standards and capability building, which "highlight both the need for creating competency standards for ICT in education and the need to empower teachers and administrators through effective ICT training."

The DepEd has been conducting ICT training for teachers with the help of its private sector partners like Microsoft, according to Lapus.

Lapus said, "It is not enough to simply provide computers with Internet connections in the classroom and hope that somehow learning will occur."

"We need a comprehensive response to the challenges and opportunities given to us by these new

technologies. We need an encompassing strategy that is backed by sound policy," he said.

Lapus again made a pitch for satellite-based distance education, referring to the ambitious P26.4-billion Cyber Education Project (CEP) that was put on hold because of ongoing legislative inquiries into alleged corruption in the National Broadband Network project. Both the CEP and the NBN were to be funded with loans from China.

"We have been pushing for the use of satellite-based distance education so that we can provide high quality educational materials to the millions of underserved school children living in the far-flung areas of our archipelago," he said.

Lapus has repeatedly endorsed the CEP, which he describes as an "ideal project" and the "best thing to happen to Philippine education."

President Macapagal-Arroyo has directed the DepEd and three other government panels—Presidential Task Force on Education, Govern-

ment Procurement Policy Board and the China Projects Oversight Panel—to review the CEP.

Fr. Bienvenido Nebres, president of Ateneo de Manila University, heads the education task force, which includes Lapus, higher education acting chair Romulo Neri and Technical Education and Skills Development head Augusto Syjuco. Four representatives from the private sector are also included: Angeles University Foundation president Emmanuel Angeles, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Donald Dy, Asian Institute of Management professor Victor Limlingan and former University of the Philippines president Jose Abueva.

The China Projects Oversight Panel, headed by Trade Secretary Peter Favila, has been tasked to "protect" the CEP from "unnecessary controversy."

Study shows more Pinays smoke than other Asians

By Julie M. Aurelio

SINGAPORE—IN 15 YEARS, WOMEN smokers in the Asia-Pacific region will out-puff women smokers in Latin America and Europe, according to health experts here.

The Philippines posted the highest rate (18 percent) of female smokers among young adults and adults, compared to Thailand's 2.4 percent and other Asian countries.

According to Dr. Antonio Anzueto of the University of Texas Health Center, this trend will most likely reflect a similar increase in smoking-related respiratory and lung diseases in Asia.

"Due to trends in smoking and environmental pollution, the prevalence of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and chronic bronchitis is very likely to increase in the Asia-Pacific," said Anzueto during a conference in Singapore last week.

Anzueto and respiratory experts discussed the impact and treatment of COPD, acute exacerbations of chronic bronchitis (AECB) and other diseases caused by smoking at a conference sponsored by Bayer Schering Pharma.

Asian epidemic

Because of increased public awareness of respiratory diseases, Europeans are now smoking less and consulting their doctors more, while Asians are smoking more, according to Anzueto.

Latin America posted the highest percentage of female smokers at 48.8 percent, followed by Europe at 43.6 percent and Asia Pacific at 34 percent.

While smoking is the main risk factor—but not the only one—incidences of COPD and AECB are not limited to current smokers as they also affect past smokers and those ex-

posed to pollution and secondhand smoke.

"This used to be a problem only in developed countries, but we now see that we are awakening to an 'epidemic' in Asia," Anzueto said.

Importance of antibiotics

COPD is defined as a group of lung diseases caused by air flow obstruction such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

AECB are periodic "flare-ups" of excessive mucus production, accompanied by coughing and breathlessness, which occur at least thrice a year.

"Without treatment with antibiotics, the symptoms get worse. The cough gets worse, the phlegm gets worse with each flare-up, and patients lose sleep and working days," Anzueto said.

In a worldwide study conducted among 55,274 patients and 8,471 doctors, Europe posted a high of 55.9 percent prevalence of chronic bronchitis, while Asia

ranked lowest at 32.2 percent.

Out of the 27,990 patients in Asia, 8,619 were from the Philippines while China contributed 12,118 participants.

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The AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS) invites interested parties to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties on "cash" or "term", "as-is, where-is" basis:

Item No.	Description	Location	Minimum / Floor Price
07-11-1	5 industrial lots with combined area of 9,448 sqm (can be sold separately)	Bulacan Agro-Industrial Subdivision, McArthur Highway, Calumpit, Bulacan	P27,567,865.00
07-11-2	4 residential lots (300 sqm each or combined area of 1,200 sqm)	Bgy Pimienta, Umingan, Pangasinan	P482,670.00
07-11-3	2 residential lots (500 sqm each or combined area of 1,000 sqm)	Bgy Prado, Umingan, Pangasinan	P210,240.00
07-11-4	House & Lot L/A 2,607 sqm F/A 818.98 sqm	29 Sunflower Drive, Beverly Hills exec Village, Taytay, Rizal	P6,373,432.00
07-11-5	House & Lot L/A 329 sqm F/A 167 sqm	B18, L4, Rosario Bayview Subd., Sucat, Muntinlupa	P2,212,686.00
07-11-6	House & Lot L/A 143 sqm F/A 138 sqm	B7, L3, North Metropark Subd., Camarin, Caloocan City	P861,124.00
07-11-7	294 sqm Residential Lot	Blk 3, Lot 8, Milton St. Filinvest Homes II, Quezon City	P1,237,005.00
07-11-8	322 sqm Residential Lot	Blk 1A, Lot 70, Victoria Homes, Muntinlupa City	P482,930.00
07-11-9	3,000 sqm residential Lot and 16,000 sqm cocoland	Bgy Cajmos, Rombon, Rombon	P1,440,743.00

For interested parties, please note the following activities that will be held at the Board Room, RSBS, 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.:

Pre-Bidding Conference Deadline for Acceptance of Bids November 27, 2007 10:00 a.m.

Opening of Sealed Bids December 4, 2007 10:00 a.m.

10:15 a.m.

Bidding documents shall be available starting November 20, 2007 at the Property Management Office, 2/F, RSBS Bldg., Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C. at P500.00 each.

For inquiries, please call Liza or Darwin at 912-4718 during office hours.

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Asean Charter OK hinges on Suu Kyi release

From page A1

Before the dinner, Ms Arroyo met for 30 minutes with Burma's Prime Minister Thein Sein, and spelled out her position, asking him to accelerate the process for the return of democracy to Burma.

Thein Sein tried to ask for understanding, saying it would be a long process, Bunye said.

Philippine officials said failure by one country in Asean to ratify the charter would mean the regional constitution would not take effect.

US Trade Representative Susan Schwab said a free trade deal between Washington and Asean was unlikely because of "the political situation in the region" and that Asean's reputation and credibility were at stake because of Burma's junta and its refusal to allow a transition to democracy.

Schwab met with Asean officials and said she had expressed concern on the "special responsibility" of Asean, the only international group to have Burma as a member.

"The credibility and reputation of Asean have been called into question because of the situation in Myanmar. Business as usual can't be business as usual," Schwab told reporters.

The United States expanded its sanctions against Burma's rulers in October, adding 11 more military leaders to a list facing sanctions and tightened US export controls.

Burma yesterday gave its full backing to the Asean Charter that will create an agency to review human rights in the region after drafters took out references to punishing violators.

The charter—which took two and a half years to seal—will be signed by Asean leaders at their

annual summit on today.

Burma, one of Asean's 10 members, was pleased with the charter despite calls for a human rights arm that would focus on abuses by its junta, Burma's senior diplomat U Aung Bwa told The Associated Press.

"We have a very good charter. I think everybody should be happy. It's quite balanced," U Aung Bwa said, adding he didn't believe Burma's internal problems should be the subject of intense scrutiny at the four-day summit.

A legal entity

The long-overdue charter is aimed at formally turning the 40-year-old organization—often derided as a powerless talk shop—into a rules-based legal entity.

That means Asean can sue and be sued, and will be held accountable for all the treaties and agreements it signs.

The charter still needs to be ratified by the parliaments of the member countries, a process that will take a year.

The US Senate voted unanimously on Friday to urge Asean to suspend Burma until the regime showed respect for human rights.

But Asean has unanimously rejected calls for a suspension, saying there was a better chance that Burma would take the road to democracy if it stayed within the group. Asean has criticized the sanctions, saying they would only hurt Burma's civilians.

"It's been tried in Iraq and nobody wants to have an Iraq in Southeast Asia," Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong was quoted as saying, echoing China, Burma's closest ally.

Economic fallout

Schwab indicated that Asean's stance of noninterference



PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO walks hand in hand with daughter Luis during a break in the 13th Asean Summit in Singapore.

ence in its members' internal politics could have economic consequences for its trade with the United States, its fifth largest trading partner.

"It's impossible to imagine a free trade agreement with Asean in the near term given the political situation," she said. Asked if this meant Burma, she said: "For example."

Diplomats say the Asean Charter means that the current option of excluding Burma from deals will end.

Free trade talks between Asean and the European Union could also stall.

Together, the United States and the European Union account for 27 percent of Asean's exports and a third of its inward

direct investment.

"There's \$168 billion of trade that we're trying to address here," said Schwab. "There's no way I could come here without expressing our concern."

In October, the European Union also strengthened sanctions against Burma, including asset freezes on generals, an export ban on equipment, plus import and investment bans.

Bilateral meetings

The Asean summit is the first major forum where all the major players in the Burma story have come face to face since the junta's bloody crackdown on democracy protesters in September.

So far the summit seems to have sharpened tensions rather than reduced them.

Japan, one of the strongest US allies in Asia, said it was neither for or against the sanctions.

Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda is to meet Burma's Prime Minister Thein Sein on Wednesday, and is set to demand an explanation for the killing of a Japanese photographer by Burmese soldiers in September, the official said.

Toothless body

One of the most significant pledges in the charter is to set up a regional human rights body. Critics note the body will have limited impact, given that it will not be able to punish governments that violate human rights of their citizens.

"I'm not sure if it will have teeth but it will certainly have a tongue," Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo said, referring to the agency's right to admonish and criticize violators.

"It will certainly have moral influence if nothing else. But these are details for the future."

Asean officials watered down the charter by dropping earlier recommendations to consider sanctions, including possible expulsion, in cases of serious breaches by member nations.

A copy of the charter seen by The Associated Press states that any such breaches would be referred to Asean heads of state "for decision."

The Burmese junta's actions in crushing pro-democracy demonstrators have greatly embarrassed Asean, which is under pressure from the West and its own people to force change in the isolated Southeast Asian nation.

Small protest

A glimmer of hope for democracy in Burma has been raised by the recent efforts of United Nations envoy Ibrahim Gambari, who met with junta leader Gen. Than Shwe and opposition leader Suu Kyi after the September crackdown.

The junta has indicated it will restart the process of national reconciliation.

The Asean leaders will also meet with leaders of China, Japan, India, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand for a second summit on Wednesday.

Nine international students from a local university staged a small protest against Burma's junta near the summit venue.

Dressed in red T-shirts that read, "We pursue peace, justice and democracy for Burma," the students each carried a candle as they walked down a main street in groups of three. Reports from Reuters and AP

Top ZTE protagonists 'not believable'—survey

From page A1

respondents were aware of the \$329-million deal between the Philippines and China's ZTE Corp. that was scuttled after the namesake son of Speaker Jose de Venecia claimed the contract to digitally wire the nation's bureaucracy was overpriced.

The survey said 70 percent of Filipinos, or seven in every 10, were aware of the bribery allegations surrounding the deal that forced the resignation of Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos.

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, chair of the blue ribbon committee, said the Senate would issue an arrest order if former Socioeconomic Planning Secre-

tary Romulo Neri does not show up at its hearing today.

Neri, now chair of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), earlier told the panel that he was offered a P200-million bribe by Abalos. He testified that he informed President Macapagal-Arroyo of the bribe offer, but refused to answer follow-up questions, claiming executive privilege.

CHED sources said that Neri was to attend a meeting in Malaysia and would not be present at today's hearing.

The Pulse Asia survey was conducted on Oct. 20-31, using face-to-face interviews with a multistage probability sample of 1,200 representative adults. It had a margin of

error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Credibility

The survey found that even after Abalos' resignation and the President's cancellation of the ZTE deal, 75 percent of those polled believed that the "best thing" for the Senate to do was to continue its investigation.

Big to overwhelming majorities (57-94 percent) across geographic areas and socioeconomic groups are aware of these issues, with awareness levels being highest in Metro Manila (93 percent) and in the Class ABC (93 percent), Pulse Asia said in a statement.

The survey also found that "near to big majorities" (48 to

73 percent) across all areas and socioeconomic classes believed that Abalos, Neri and Amsterdam Holdings cofounder Jose "Joey" de Venecia III were all equally not credible—a sentiment most pronounced in the Visayas (70 percent) and Mindanao (73 percent).

One in every five (22 percent) believed that Joey de Venecia was more credible than Abalos and Neri—an opinion most pronounced in Metro Manila (31 percent) and among members of classes ABC (32 percent).

Probe should continue

Around one in every 10 (12 percent) believed Abalos was the most credible of the three. Only 8 percent held Neri as

most believable.

The opinion that the Senate should continue its investigation into the ZTE deal, on the other hand, was shared by "considerable to big majorities" across geographic areas and socioeconomic groups—from 68 percent in Mindanao to 81 percent in Metro Manila.

The view that it would be better for the Senate to stop its investigation was most supported by those in Mindanao (32 percent).

Palace suggestion

The Ulat ng Bayan surveys are undertaken by Pulse Asia on its own without any party singularly commissioning the research effort.

On Sunday, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita urged the Senate to wrap up its hearing. He wondered though why the Senate was still continuing with its inquiry when the NBN contract had been canceled and Abalos had resigned.

"So as a layman, what do I say? What is the object of the hearing?" Ermita said, making it clear he was "not faulting the Senate for doing what they want to do."

"We wish that we can go on with the business of governance because many things are happening that are needed by the Filipino people," he added. With reports from Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research, and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Jerry E. Esplanada and Christine Q. Avendano.

Gonzalez back at DOJ after going to 'hell'

From page A1

and well-being.

He underwent a kidney transplant at the National Kidney Transplant Institute (NKTI) in September with his driver Feleco Gunay as the donor.

"My friends, I went to hell and back," Gonzalez said, citing the title of Audie Murphy's memoir "To Hell and Back."

Murphy is America's most decorated combat hero of World War II who later became a successful Hollywood actor.

"You cannot imagine the pain I underwent during my operation," said the Justice secretary in his speech following the flag ceremony.

Survivor

But thanks to the prayers of his friends, supporters and family, especially his wife, Pacita, Gonzalez has recovered.

His wife accompanied Gonzales to the DOJ yesterday.

"I was able to survive a very serious medical problem. As Undersecretary [Fidel] Exconde said and he quotes Gen. [Douglas] MacArthur: I have returned," the justice secretary said.

A kidney transplant involves the implantation of a healthy kidney into a patient suffering from kidney failure.

According to the US National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health, over 90 percent of kidney recipients survive for at least a year after the operation. After a decade, about half of the transplanted kidneys remain functional.

Assistance not required

Gonzalez happily took note of the balloons and streamers hanging above his office door and in the basketball court with messages such as "DOJ loves Secretary Raul M. Gonzalez" and "Welcome Back to DOJ."

At first, he thought there was a "tiangge" or a sale at the DOJ. His second thought was it was too early to be celebrating his birthday. He said the streamers made him feel welcome.

Whether or not the messages on the streamers come from the depths of your hearts, I don't know, but thank you and good day," he told DOJ employees.

The 76-year-old Gonzalez appeared much stronger compared to the weeks before his surgery, when he required assistance to get around.

Special precautions

Yesterday, he walked by himself from his office to the park-

ing lot at the back of the DOJ where the flag ceremony was held.

Being susceptible to infections, Gonzalez has taken special precautions with his new kidney.

People have to squirt sanitizer on their hands before entering his office. Wooden dividers enclose the area around his desk, leaving an opening wide enough for one or two people.

Journalists have been requested to interview the justice secretary from a distance of two to three feet away.

Gunay, Gonzalez's kidney donor, continues to work for him.

He drove the justice secretary to the office that day and said he felt fine. His subsequent checkups showed there was nothing wrong with him, despite having one less kidney.

Gunay said he was told to cut back on meat and alcohol and to refrain from strenuous exercise like jogging.

Continue policies

Meanwhile, Gonzalez said he would continue the policies he

implemented when he took over the DOJ three years ago.

According to him, the Constitution guarantees equal justice for everyone but not everyone has equal opportunity for justice.

Citing the right to bail as an example, he said the rich can afford to pay bail and gain temporary liberty but the poor cannot readily do so.

Gonzalez said it was his duty to make sure people had equal opportunities for justice and to see to it that the social justice system, not just the criminal

justice system, was working.

Let's work together

The country is in a crisis because of political conflict, according to Gonzalez.

He asked the DOJ employees to work together so that the nation might progress.

Gonzalez said he would address concerns of the department but stressed that complaints must be supported by evidence.

He also announced that the justice undersecretaries appointed during his absence would keep their posts since it was the President who appointed them.

Lacson is impressed

Sen. Panfilo Lacson was so impressed by Gonzalez's zeal to return to work, the opposition senator said he was seriously considering endorsing Gonzalez's confirmation.

In an interview with reporters, Lacson, who had vigorously blocked Gonzalez's confirmation in the last Congress, said he had softened his stand, not out of pity but out of respect for Gonzalez who is racing to go back to work after a debilitating ailment.

"I'm inclined to recommend his confirmation to remove the sword of Damocles that has been hanging over his head," said Lacson. With a report from Gil Cabacungan



HE'S BAACK! Controversial Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez gets a warm welcome from his staff at the Department of Justice on Monday.

REMI ZAMORA

Kids learn all about respect at Inquirer Read-Along

By Kate V. Pedrosa
Inquirer Research

AN AUDIENCE OF OVER 40 CHILDREN, AMONG them four children of celebrities, learned about respect for elders, the value of siblings and the origin of the *ampalaya* in the Inquirer Read-Along session held at National Book Store at the Power Plant Mall in Makati City on Saturday.

Lorin and Venice Bektas, daughters of actress Ruffa Gutierrez, came to the session with Jaye Bautista, Gutierrez's executive assistant. Benjamin and Ella Pangilinan also came with their mother, returning celebrity reader Marcel Laxa-Pangilinan.

Aside from Pangilinan, another guest reader, Lyn Danao of Adarna Publishing, read stories to the children during the 16th Inquirer Read-Along, the third time the session was held outside the Inquirer offices on Chino Roces Avenue in Makati.

Danao, a Mass Communications graduate of Centro Escolar University, kicked off the program with the story, "Tiktakto at Pikitabum," about a pair of brother dogs that had opposite attitudes—one was kind and responsible, while the other was ill-tempered and mischievous.

Good values

"As a storyteller, I believe you can influence young minds, impart good values," said Danao, an Adarna storyteller since 2004.

She also read "Ang Alamat ng Ampalaya" by Augie Rivera, a story about the *ampalaya*, which was characterized as a greedy and envious vegetable that earned the ire of fairies.

Danao encouraged the participation of the audience in both stories. At one point, four-year-old Lorin Bektas went up front to count out numbers in Turkish, while her sister Venice, 3, participated in the dramatization of some scenes from the first story.

"They [Lorin and Venice] have attended other [storytelling sessions]," said Bautista, who usually accompanies the Bektas sisters outside their home. "But the way [the stories were] presented today made them really interested. This was the first time they actually interacted," she said, adding that Lorin already knew how to read.

On the other hand, Pangilinan read "Super Benj," for which she was recently cited by the Catholic Mass Media Awards.

Power of prayer

The story, which Pangilinan herself wrote, emphasizes trust in God, the importance of family and the power of prayer.

Pangilinan, who launched "Super Benj" late last year in time for Benj's fifth birthday, was a celebrity guest storyteller for the Inquirer Read-Along in August. "Super Benj" is based on the experience of six-year-old Benj, who underwent heart surgery two years ago for a congenital heart condition.

"Initially, Super Benj was listed under the Children's Magazine category, so I was almost sure we wouldn't win," she said. "But then, they gave us a special citation. It was as good as providing a category for the book."

Pangilinan also read "Bruhahaha, Bruhihi" by Ma Corazon Remigio, about a misunderstood old woman and a child who had the heart to see through the cloud of superstition and rumors surrounding the woman called "bruha" by others.

Asean traders to get expert help for crafts

EXPERTS HELPING THE HANDICRAFT INDUSTRY in Asean countries to better compete in the global market will meet in an international forum dubbed "Business Opportunities 2008" to be held at the SMX Convention Center on Nov. 22-24.

The experts are from the Philippines, Brunet, Canada, Greece, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Nepal, Nigeria, South Africa, Thailand and the United States.

Biz Ops '08 will be held in conjunction with the international Arts and Crafts Expo, a project of the Department of Tourism, Department of Trade and Industry and Department of Foreign Affairs with the Asean Handicrafts Promotion and Development Association (AHPADA).

Dr. Mina T Gabor, former tourism secretary and co-chair of the national host committee for the expo, said speakers will include Maldives Tourism Minister Maamood Shougee, Manitoba (Canada) Culture and Tourism Minister Eric Robinson, Philippine Tourism Authority General Manager Robert Dean Barbers, Trade Undersecretary Carissa Cruz-Evangelista and Foreign Secretary Franklin Ebdalin.

The meetings will cover product development and the marketing of arts and crafts, an artists' exchange, success stories and best practices in arts and crafts in Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) countries.

The forum will include a presentation of the CraftsNet Project and the formation of a Euro Asia CraftsNetwork.

The results of workshops on product design, marketing trends, global cooperation on arts and crafts, and a proposed code of ethics will be presented. A Manila Declaration on Arts and Crafts will be turned over to the DrA.

At the end of the session, the children and their parents were more than happy with how the event turned out.

"It is a good interactive tool to encourage children to not only read, but to be attentive and to mingle with others," said Bautista.

Joseline Banan, who came with her seven-year-old granddaughter Isabel Angelique, said last week's Inquirer Read-Along session with Soraya Rococo caught her attention, adding that their first Inquirer Read-Along session was "very interesting."

"We are definitely attending more sessions in the future," Banan said.

The activity was held in cooperation with National Book Store Foundation, Adarna Publishing House and Soroptomist International of Eastwood.

The next Inquirer Read-Along session is set for Nov. 24 and will feature model-actress Donita Rose as the guest reader.

(Interested parties may call Ellen Caparros or Giselle Refran at tel. 897-8808, local 329. Those interested in donating books to the program may send an e-mail to inquirer-readalong@inquirer.com.ph.)



Marcel Laxa gives an entertaining read of the book she wrote, "Super Benj."

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OPINION

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Hands off

WHEN POLICE INVESTIGATORS ANNOUNCED last week that they had solved the Batasan bombing which killed Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar and three others, they took pains to clarify that they were not ready to name anyone as the mastermind yet. They had arrested three suspects, including a brother-in-law and a former driver of former Deputy Speaker Gerry Salapuddin. They had confiscated a license plate once used by the former congressman, whom Akbar's first wife defeated in the gubernatorial race last May. And they had an admission from the suspects that Wahab was the target.

But the investigators stressed that they had nothing conclusive to link Salapuddin to the assassination. "At this point, Congressman Salapuddin is not a suspect," PNP Director General Avelino Razon said. "Unless we can get evidence or testimony to his complicity in this case, then we can say that he is a suspect."

Given what must have been a strong temptation to seize upon a sensational solution to a sensational crime, such tact and circumspection on the part of police investigators can be quite remarkable. Regrettably, however, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita took a different tack by virtually clearing Salapuddin. "I don't think he would do that," he told reporters Sunday. While Salapuddin is a former commander of the Moro National Liberation Front, Ermita said, he has become "a success story in the government's rebel returnee program" and "a very honorable man." It was Ermita who facilitated Salapuddin's surrender in 1984.

In vouching for Salapuddin's innocence so very publicly, Ermita probably thought he was helping a friend. It is doubtful that he succeeded; in fact, what he did was unfair to the former congressman. Ermita is not part of the police investigating team, so his absolution has not prompted people to nod in agreement, but it has only raised eyebrows. And what he knows about Salapuddin or how he regards the man is irrelevant. "Honorable" is how lawmakers and other officials in government want themselves to be addressed, but there are not very many in Congress who deserve to be called so. There is nothing in the law or the public experience that suggests that Ermita's testimonial should put anyone above suspicion.

Only the police, after a thorough and impartial investigation, can clear Salapuddin to everyone's satisfaction. But by his meddling, Ermita has made that outcome more difficult to achieve. His rush to exonerate Salapuddin has fainted with political color what once seemed to be a sound and professional job being done by investigators. What looked like an admirable exercise of discretion has been made to look like the product of mindless direction from the Palace.

It is bad enough that some groups are trying to introduce race and religion into the equation, curiously demanding an "interfaith" investigation of the bombing. But Ermita has made things worse by poking his nose into a matter that should be left for the police and the National Bureau of Investigation to handle. Such unwarranted meddling only adds fuel to the suspicion that even our investigating bodies are being manipulated to serve, not the ends of justice, but the whims and caprices of those who are in power. Public officials, especially those occupying the most powerful positions, should learn when to leave things alone.

Crackdown on vice

APPARENTLY THE IRANIAN PEOPLE WERE STARTING TO enjoy themselves a little too much to suit the ruling clerics. Supreme leader Ali Khamenei has ordered a police crackdown on "social vices." So the police have been seizing satellite dishes and raiding private parties in search of alcohol, unapproved videos and CDs and other trappings of Western decadence.

The repressive hand of the ayatollahs has fallen especially hard on Iranian women who are enjoined from wearing "inappropriate" makeup and clothes that show any part of the hair or the leg. Bright colors are out, too. You don't have to be a sociologist to see that this crackdown on vice, which elsewhere would be seen as the innocent music, fashion and films of the young, is not going to work and may even end badly.

A very young nation, Iran has, according to the International Monetary Fund, the world's highest brain drain. The best and brightest of Iran's young people seem to want only one thing—out:

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Chewing one's words

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado



"MAN DOES NOT LIVE BY WORDS ALONE, although sometimes he must eat them," Adlai Stevenson said in the heat of his US presidential election bid. So, is former President Joseph Estrada swallowing his words as the brawl over the court seizure of loot intensifies?

Reread Erap, suggests "My National Disaster It's called the Republic of the Philippines." This insightful New York blog is written by former PCGG commissioner Ruben Carranza. It quotes Estrada to Estrada.

"Hindi nilalambang ang krimen. Dinudugog Hindi kinukupuk ang kriminal. Pinaparushahan." Estrada perorated in his 1999 State of the Nation address. "Crime should not be treated gently. It should be crushed. Criminals should not be codded. They must be punished."

Hindsight is always 20/20. Issuing decrees, as a lawmaker, is a different kettle of fish from abiding by that guideline, even as a pardoned lawbreaker. So, Erap whines for kid glove treatment as the court ordered Sheriff Edgardo Urieta: Shear other properties to make up for shortfalls, if there's welching on restitution.

Poul, Estrada protested. His lawyers scrambled to quash the writs, arguing that the seizures would exceed the court decision. A convicted plunderer doesn't owe the state the monetary value of what he swiped. Therefore, Erap can't be compelled to cough up pre-panseaking assets like the Tanay and Polk Street mansions, a fleet of cars and other assets. *Nilalambang ang krimen? Kinukupuk ang kriminal?*

The court will hear Erap out this week. He scoffed, meanwhile, at Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio's proposal to grab back the pardon papers if forfeiture is derailed. "What was granted to me was unconditional clemency."

Equitable PCT Bank (now spliced with Banco de Oro), meanwhile, heeded a court order. It yielded P215 million refrigerated from the program-less Erap Muslim Youth Foundation. Equitable still smarts from criticism of its coddling of Estrada while he was in power.

The amount seized, so far, is peanuts. It's a fraction of the P545.29 million that the court

said was creamed off from "illegal gambling payoffs and ... ordered forfeited in favor of government." Is there anything left of the P189 million stashed in the Jose Velarde account, after the panicked withdrawals? And the "Boracay Mansion" has been cannibalized.

These minuscule seizures are highly publicized. They come in a country where the main under-the-table industry, by a moneybag aristocracy, is hauling cash to the grave. Its members claw to keep what they've pilfered.

Thus, the Marcoses try to wrest loot stashed with Lucio Tan and other cronies, and which Bongbong and Imee now claim. Cronies camouflage every centavo, mansion and hacienda. "Count" Herminio Disini wallows in the Bataan nuclear plant booby. Hava Lapu-Lapu Mayor Arturo Radaza and ex-Mandaue Mayor Thadeo Quano made restitution for the overpriced Asean street lamps?

Eduardo Cojuangco and partners hang on to the coconut levy, extorted from small farmers by martial law. And Mega-Pacific hasn't repaid P1.2 billion to the Commission on Elections for defective computers, thumbing its corporate nose at a Supreme Court decision.

Pampanga is a case study of this burgle. Without raising quarry levy rates by a centavo, Pampanga Gov. Eduardo Panfilio collected P88.6 million in 95 days. Transparent governance did the trick. Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapu-Lapu and son, Mark, as governors, took three-and-a-half years, to collect an equivalent sum, Inquirer's Tonette Oreyas noted.

At this rate, Panfilio will collect P354 million in a year of 313 working days, Columnist Antonio Abaya tallied. In this country, men have killed for

less. If assassins don't get "Among Ed," the governor, by the end of his term, will have infused P1.41 billion into Pampanga's anemic treasury.

That's P1.3 billion more than the amount the Lapidis put into Pampanga's treasure trove. "Only God and the Lapidis know where the difference vanished to," Abaya says. Not even Pampanga's most distinguished daughter? Do plunderers get to keep the plunder?

Pampanga officials won't pin a medal on Panfilio for tutoring a lackadaisical Bureau of Internal Revenue on how to boost tax collections eight times. Mayors instead scramble for "greater control over quarrying," notes Columnist Randy David in his Nov. 17 column. "The crisis of cash politics." Through Ordinance 176, the provincial board would strip the governor of tax powers and vest them in associations of quarry operators and officials. The fox will guard the chicken coop.

Cebu City also resorts to financial castration. Mayor Tomas Osmeña would gut the revenue base of a key barangay, Lahug, by smudging tax maps; he'd shuffle lucrative taxpayers into barangays headed by his minions. That would bypass Lahug's multi-awarded and independent Mary Ann de los Santos.

"It is the old system gasping for life," David observes. Such a system rewards crooks by spurning "restitution." But making good for harm done is rooted in justice.

"God himself cannot pardon if ... in matters of thievery, restitution is not made of stolen goods," Jesuit anthropologist Bishop Francisco Claver wrote. (INQUIRER, 11/7/07) And former Sen. Jovito Salonga reminded Estrada earlier of the "Zacchaeus precedent." The tax collector Zacchaeus told the Master: "Half of my goods, I give to the poor. And if I've cheated anyone, I pay him back four times as much."

Must Erap and other "leaders" eat their words to understand Seneca's caution? "The most grievous kind of penury is to want money in the midst of wealth."

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Salt on wound

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED?

Barely had the rains seeped into the ground that covered Mariannet Amper's body than the Davao city government was quick to declare it had found "new evidence" to show that Mariannet might not have hanged herself out of desperate straits after all. She might have hanged herself from the trauma of having been raped.

The medico-legal announced that the autopsy on her revealed that her hymen had been broken. The police authorities subsequently theorized rape, summoning the entire family for questioning. They got nothing from any of Mariannet's parents or siblings or cousins by way of corroboration, but they continued to hang on to the theory. And purvey it to the public with the help of media.

Last Friday, I saw Mariannet's father on TV tearfully and indignantly, such as the poor and helpless can be indignant, protesting the idea, specifically since the police were throwing all sorts of unsavory suggestions in his direction. "What are you saying?" he cried before the cameras. "What do you think I am? Do you think I'm such a monster, do you think I'm such a malevolent creature, that I would do such a thing to my daughter? I loved my daughter! I would never have allowed any harm to come to her!"

Let us be clear: if the police can convincingly make a case of rape, I would most certainly lend my voice to the condemnation of it and the punishment of the perpetrator. Rape is a heinous crime, and that of a minor completely unforgivable. Particularly where it is compounded by the child taking her own life, no punishment can be enough for someone who has caused this. It's about time we did something about this blight, one that seems to ravage folk living in the slums in particular.

But there's something deeply infuriating about how the Davao authorities are going about this. At the very least, they could have revealed the results of the autopsy long before Mariannet was buried when it would have been possible to corroborate their findings. The only way you can do that now is by exhuming the body.

Why didn't they do it then? Was it consideration for the feelings of the bereaved that made them stay their hand, or hold their tongue, until after it was too late? Well, if so then they shouldn't be called law enforcers or heaven forbid, authorities. You make a call about right and wrong whatever the circumstances, and no circumstance can be more right than accusing the author of a vile deed in front of the victim of his deed: That is the source of your (moral) authority. Were the police truly serious about their case, they would have made it right there and then, at Mariannet's wake, thereby giving her the justice she deserved. That they didn't do so is enough to make an already cynical public suspect they do not really have a case at all.

What reason would the authorities have to lie?

Plenty. Rodrigo Duterte, who was among the first to broadcast the theory of rape, is an ardent supporter of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and can't particularly like it that his favorite hometown has become the source of this regime's hugest embarrassment—at a time when it's desperately trying to convince the citizens that unbeknownst to them things have never been better for them than today. It is to his, and GMA's, interest to show that no one, least of all a child, commits suicide in this country out of impoverishment and deprivation. The only way 12-year-olds might do so is, well, if they were abused by other people, possibly their fathers or older brothers.

It is infuriating. Made doubly so each time you see that ad about ordinary Filipinos now *ramdam na ramdam na* or feeling to the pit of their soul, or body, the prosperity that is apparently gripping this country. An ad that now overtakes TV and spoils my view of the NBA. Mariannet is there to show there's something else gripping this country, there's something else most of us are feeling to the marrow of our bones, and it is not prosperity. Indeed, Mariannet's folks are there to show that if you're poor today, you may not expect to feel only hunger; you may expect to feel oppressed. You may expect to suffer insult on top of injury.

You may expect to have salt rubbed on wound.

rich or middle class, Duterte and company would have thought twice before bandying their speculations freely or broadly hinting at their complicity in an unproven crime lest they get a case filed against them. Because if it isn't true at all, then it is adding insult to injury, then it is rubbing salt on wound. It's bad enough that a father has lost a daughter in those circumstances, and who is probably even now blaming himself for it, having failed to provide for his family. To have oneself accused moreover—if indirectly, if by innuendo, if by speculation, of having had a hand in that death—that is intolerable.

The "indirectly" doesn't make it better. It's not inconceivable that at the end of the day, the police will drop the matter, unless they are willing to exhume the body and allow it to be examined by independent sources. But not after making Mariannet's father and brothers objects of opprobrium of the community, forever bounded by suspicion of having sent one of their own to the grave. Indeed, not after muddling the issue enough to make it appear that a 12-year-old child had hanged herself not because she found life's hardships intolerable—while at this, why would Mariannet include among her wishes jobs for her parents if she found one of them too detestable for words?—but because she might or might not have been raped.

It is infuriating. Made doubly so each time you see that ad about ordinary Filipinos now *ramdam na ramdam na* or feeling to the pit of their soul, or body, the prosperity that is apparently gripping this country. An ad that now overtakes TV and spoils my view of the NBA. Mariannet is there to show there's something else gripping this country, there's something else most of us are feeling to the marrow of our bones, and it is not prosperity. Indeed, Mariannet's folks are there to show that if you're poor today, you may not expect to feel only hunger; you may expect to feel oppressed. You may expect to suffer insult on top of injury.

OPINION

Pressuring Asean on Burma

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



I CAME TO KNOW HIM WELL DURING HIS THREE terms in Congress, and I must say it's difficult for me to believe he could have masterminded the bomb blast that killed Rep. Wahab Akbar. Former Basilan Rep. and former Deputy Speaker for Mindanao Gerry Sulapuddin is, to quote his colleagues, a decent man; and after renouncing his being a MNLF commander, he turned to the ways of peace and became a responsible House leader. This same sense was reflected in his decision to go to the police to help enlighten them on the Akbar murder and profess his innocence. I hope the authorities would be able to get to the bottom of the case.

The highlight of the 13th Asean Summit which opened yesterday in Singapore is the presentation of the Asean Charter to the 10 member-states of the Asean for their approval and signature. We ought to take special pride, for the Charter was drafted during the stewardship of the Philippines, which hosted the 12th Asean Summit in Cebu last January. This document took a long time to promulgate because of issues (e.g., human rights) that severely challenged the 40-year-old regional organization's non-interference policy. A high-level task force, chaired by Ambassador Rosario Manalo, put the draft charter together, with inputs from the Eminent Persons Group of which former President Ramos was a member.

It is hoped that, aside from the economic and political provisions, the cultural aspect—under which democratic principles especially on human rights and the dignity of the human person are emphasized—is highlighted. The extrajudicial killings here and the slaying of pro-democracy protesters in Burma (Myanmar) have roused virulent reactions.

As the Singapore Summit opened, a lot of pressure was put on the Asean to take a stronger action against Burma. Despite some glimmer of reconciliation between the military junta and pro-democracy leader Aung Sang Suu Kyi, US President George Bush and Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda

FROM 1996 to 2006, WRITES DR. JONATHAN Flavie, "there were two divergent family planning policies in Quezon City and the City of Manila. With the leadership of Mayor Sonny Belmonte, family planning was encouraged; and an essentially non-existent budget for family planning services and commodities was increased to more than P10 million per year. On the other hand, Mayor Lito Atienza started his three terms by issuing a notorious executive order that discouraged most of the modern methods of family planning. He constrained family planning choices throughout those nine years in office, and 'rewarded' families with many children."

"As a result, women have cried out in misery in Manila while more cheered the availability of opportunities to space pregnancies and to manage family size in Quezon City."

Giving data from the Department of Health's Field Health Service Information System, Flavie tracks just two indicators: live births per 1,000 population, and maternal deaths per 100,000 married women of reproductive age in the two cities in the decade he mentions. The graphs alone tell a most obvious and moving story.

While the birth rate declined rather steeply in Quezon City—from 35 per 100,000 in 1996 to just three or four per 100,000 in 2006, it basically remained the same in Manila—from 27 per 100,000 in 1996, to 23 per 100,000 in 2006. The figures for maternal mortality—deaths of women due to causes related to pregnancy or child birth—tell an even more dramatic tale. Maternal mortality declined in Quezon City, from 10 per 100,000 in 1996, shooting up to 14 per 100,000 in 1997, then tapering off to about three per 100,000 in 2006. In Manila, maternal mortality rates rose steadily from about seven per 100,000 in 1996, reaching a peak of about 12 per 100,000 in 2005 and tapering to about seven per 100,000 in 2006. (I suspect the data for 2006 was still incomplete, thus the small numbers.)

JONDI Flavie, son of Juan Flavie, a former health secretary and former senator, and who is himself a health and family planning advocate,

Is advertising good for democracy?

NEWSSTAND

John Nery



THIS WEEK, ALL ROADS LEAD TO SUBIC. THE Ad Congress, the advertising industry's biennial extravaganza—part conference of ideas, part festival of winning works, part street party of loud and lively revelers—begins tomorrow in the former American naval base. At one time one of the biggest military installations outside the United States, Subic is a fitting venue to discuss the power of advertising. After all, what is "projection of force" by forward-deployed units if not advertising in its most fundamental form?

Watching the press screening of "Beowulf" last week led me back to our own ancient epics, to Lam-ang (who was in such a hurry to fight he took to the battlefield at the age of nine months), to Sandaya (who was born Athena-like by falling out of his mother's hair on the ninth stroke), to Agyu. (A 1983 volume on five Philippine epics, prepared by University of the Philippines professors for a series on Asean literatures, is an invaluable source and a rattling good read.) A trope common to all these epics, Beowulf included, is the search for a hero, a protector, "the man for the people."

I have been around Among Ed, the priest-governor of Pampanga, enough times to know that his improbable victory and his counter-traditional politics excite the same kind of epic longing among some weary voters. I shared the stage with him in the late afternoon session of the American Studies Association of the Philippines general conference at the UP last Saturday, and I noticed the same kind of excitement take hold of many in the audience. I may have the chance to write about this next time; in the meantime, I will upload our remarks to both the Newsstand and INQUIRER Current blogs.

Also, I found an instructive error in one of Benedict Anderson's capsule surveys of Philippine history, and was moved by this discovery and by my own error-ridden experience last week to consider what Frank Kermode calls

the uses of error. But not now. Now we consider the uses of advertising.

Is advertising good for democracy? This seems like a counter-intuitive question to ask. Daniel Boorstin famously described advertising as the "characteristic rhetoric of democracy." By that he meant that it was the language in which the democratic impulse—"to give everyone everything"—finds its supreme expression.

That is certainly a promise that many advertisements effortlessly fulfill. The ads that offer cheaper rates or better pricing packages for the use of SMS, for example, are about as grassroots-democratic as one can get. Communication makes community, and the consumer's newfound ability to text more for less is empowering.

I am also reminded of something a telecommunications expert said back in the beginning of time, that is to say in the year 2000: For an overseas worker in, say, Hong Kong, a cheaper rate for calling back home meant a better quality of life.

Advertising is also relentlessly democratic in the sense that, together with soap operas and variety shows, it provides us with the common language, the lingua franca, of everyday life.

Those who work with small groups, whether in school assemblies or parish communities or business planning sessions, can confirm this phenomenon: when small groups are tasked with very little time to make a presentation in story form, they often use narratives popularized in commercials: the mother who keeps up with the Joneses in KFC, the encounter between old rivals

Gus Peace Prize goes to Alvarez. Now chair of the Philippine Mining Development Corporation, he's recognized principally for his environmental advocacy and pioneering crusade here since the early '90s against global warming and climate change. The Gus Peace Foundation is chaired by Ambassador Barry Gus, its president is PCSO Director Manuel Morato.

Happening:

The Israeli Embassy's 8th Film Festival started yesterday and runs up to Nov. 22. New Israeli Ambassador Zvi Vheni hosts the gala opening tonight of "Someone to Run With" at Cinema 5, Greenbelt 3, Makati. A much-acclaimed documentary, handled quite sensitively by famed Israeli director Turner Heyman and titled "Paper Dolls," will also be shown at the NOCA in Intramuros at 2 p.m. today and at the UP La Salle, PWU and FEU in the next few days. "Paper Dolls," which won awards at the recent CineManila and the Berlin Festival in 2006, should be most interesting to us; it tells the story of Filipinos illegally working as caregivers in Israel and in a nightclub during their days off, and the numerous problems they run into until their deportation.

The "Angelos," the hottest group of young Filipino male singers, some of whom had extensive singing experience abroad, gives another classical-pop concert tonight at 8 p.m. at the Music Museum in Greenhills, San Juan. Billed as the Pinoy version of the Italian rage "Il Divo," they gave a concert last month for the benefit of the Alay sa Kaway Foundation. Don't miss them tonight.

Galileo Enoteca, the only restaurant in Manila serving Sicilian cuisine and wines, celebrates its second anniversary today. Started by Vanessa Vitiano, a 23-year-old Italian-Filipina HRM graduate of De La Salle-St. Benilde, Galileo Enoteca is the fulfillment of her graduation thesis. It's a family affair—her dad, Gaetano Vitiano of Montemaggiore, Sicily, is the firm's president, her aunt is the cook, and Vanessa runs the operations, sales and marketing. Located at the ground floor of Reyes Gym at Calbayog corner Malinao Streets in Mandaluyong, with a branch on Pasong Tamo in Makati, it can be reached at 534-4633 or 532-0482.

for themselves how best to raise their children.

PERHAPS aware that Mayor Belmonte is on his third term (he ran unopposed in the last election) and that his successor could very well overturn his policies—if he or she had a mind to—the Quezon City Anti-poverty Task Force, composed of 12 departments of the city government, drafted a proposed ordinance to "protect" the city's reproductive health program.

City Councilor Joseph "Sep" Juico agreed to be the main sponsor mainly because he also believed such an important policy, which has vital implications on the health and lives of the poor, needed to be "institutionalized," protected as it were from partisan bickering and budget uncertainties.

But from the moment he filed the proposed ordinance in August, Juico has come under fire from the Catholic Church and has been called names, one of which is being an "abortionist."

In a privilege speech he delivered last Nov. 12, Juico responded to accusations that the ordinance is "pro-abortion." "This ordinance explicitly opposes abortion, in no way does it encourage or support abortion," he said. "The ordinance underscores that abortion is illegal and is punishable under our criminal laws.... Abortion is not the same as preventing conception from taking place—which is what condoms, pills, IUD and the like do.... At bottom, the goal of the ordinance is to prevent abortions from ever taking place."

IN AN INTERVIEW, Juico says all he wants to do at this point is "to listen to all the sides, and use their views to refine the ordinance." He says: "I appeal to everyone, not just to the Catholic leaders, not to jump to conclusions and to wait for the proper venue, like a public hearing, to make themselves heard."

But in the noise and din that church authorities are whipping up in Quezon City, it's difficult to make oneself heard, much less have a meaningful dialogue. If it's noise they want, then perhaps it's time women, men and children also had their say in Quezon City.

Manny Pacquiao and Erik Morales in SMB.

So far, so "masa." The problem lies elsewhere, in advertising's breathtaking power to make us forget. "Erasure," Boorstin called it. "Insofar as advertising is competitive or innovative is widespread, erasure is required in order to persuade consumers that this year's model is superior to last year's."

Hence, Juan Ponce Enrile's stunning transformation, in the 1987 elections, from Cory Aquino's headache into a born-again statesman (complete with heavenly sunlight as backdrop). Hence, Francis Escudero's successful crossover, in this year's elections, from the leader of the House opposition who can only say no, to a leader who says yes to nonnegotiable principles. Hence, Jamie Madrigal's effective and massively funded transition, in the 2004 elections, from ex-Estrada cabinet member to Judy Ann Santos' best friend. (At a rally I covered in Batangas, I heard Madrigal say, "If you vote for me, I will come back here with Judy," or words to the same grating effect.)

Advertising, therefore, requires some form of memory loss, or is predicated on aggressively burying old memories under new sensations, to move the consumer-citizen to buy the new product, the new and improved candidate. (Enrile again: In 2004, he successfully ran for the Senate as a single-issue candidate, on the controversial purchased power arrangement, effectively redefining himself all over again.)

Don't get me wrong. Advertising today subsidizes much of the work of media, for that reason alone, it is very much a force for good in democracy. I never tire of quoting Raymond Aron's practical defense of a free press. "Success," he said, is "the one and only condition of independence." At another time, he described such success in terms of a "sufficiently prosperous and liberal" press.

But advertising's power of erasure should give all of us pause. "The struggle of man against power," Milan Kundera wrote, "is the struggle of memory against forgetting."

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People

EXCEPT FOR PRESIDENTS, I HAVE PROBABLY MET ALL kinds of people—politicians, lawyers, journalists, criminals, scholars, con artists, businessmen, pimps, ex-convicts, doctors, actors, sailors, security guards—all kinds!

No man is an island, said John Donne. People come and go in our lives. Our lives are enriched or destroyed by people; in the end, our lives are all intertwined, like the threads of a magnificent tapestry designed by a master

YOUNG BLOOD

Samuel Bautista

We meet people and we either like them or not. It is said that first impressions are lasting. But I guess we know of persons who turn out to be different from our first impressions. Either he's better than we thought him to be, or he could turn out to be our worst nightmares.

There are some people who radiate with good vibes the first time we meet them. We feel as if we've known them for a long time. None of those awkward moments with strangers; the getting-to-know-you period is just a formality. We simply get along with them so naturally.

And then there are people we really dislike the moment we meet them. All it takes is just one look, and we're sure of our feelings for them. Mind you, I'm not saying that the feeling is purely on the physical level. There is more to that: jammed psychic vibrations, like two people's frequencies going haywire?

How do you explain that? You don't. You may have your theories on why you have felt this or that feeling for a complete stranger or new acquaintance, but the fact is, people believe what they want to believe. You may like a person because she reminds you of your former lover; that person may like you because she thinks you're her mother in her past life in Pompeii. Anyway, the important thing is to get along with each other.

But remember: you have to like yourself first before you can be liked. Then again, you may be the most neurotic, manic depressive creature on this planet and people will still flock to you. Misery, after all, loves company.

The bottom line is: People are people and you can't live without them so you might as well get used to the idea that they're here to stay.

Me, I just sing George Michael's "Kissing A Fool": People/you can never change the way they feel/Better let them do just what they will/for they will..."

Samuel Bautista, 24, has a degree in Business Administration from the University of the East. He is currently self-employed and is preparing for his masteral studies.

Vicious politics

John Mychal A. Feraren

I USED TO BELIEVE THAT AMONG THE SOCIAL SCIENCES, political science was the least useful. Maybe it was because I used to think that life was a sweet candy. Of course, I was wrong.

My mother used to be our barangay chairperson. She was not perfect, I admit, but I know she really tried hard to fulfill her promises to the people. She promised them that she would introduce reforms in our barangay. Indeed, there were some visible results. Our barangay, though located in a city, once looked like a remote rural village. When my mother assumed the chairmanship of our barangay, she and her colleagues made the place more pleasant for its residents.

A flashback: When she was not yet the chairperson, the organization of which she was one of the leaders worked for water service and electricity to reach some parts of our barangay. The organization even gave school supplies to less fortunate youths.

As I said, she was not perfect but she was an exemplary public servant nonetheless. I thought everything was going fine until her friends (when she was still a private citizen) started to say nasty things against her. While she was busy implementing her programs, her "friends" were also busy destroying her name.

When we talked about it, she said it was fine, but the pain in her eyes was obvious. I started hating those people.

Her job as the chairperson was tough. Four of the council members opposed her. One used to be a very good friend, but he turned into her foe when she stopped him from carrying out unlawful activities. The four councilors even charged her with corruption, a false charge because otherwise our family would not have money problems.

My mother's "popularity" even reached a wider audience when a provincial newspaper owned by a neighbor (of all people) started writing negative articles about her, including her alleged corruption and abuse of authority. These were unfounded charges, because if indeed she was corrupt, we would have had bountiful sources, and if she were abusive, our barangay would not have become as peaceful as it is today.

In the last election, this irresponsible journalist ran against my mother. I do not want to say that he cheated, because I have grown tired of the cliché that no one loses an election in the Philippines—he is always cheated of victory. But unfortunately, he won.

My mother lost her position to someone whose residency has been questioned since he did not live in our barangay for more than five years. More painfully, her old friends supported her destroyer. So the number of votes she got was not even close to the winner's.

I wonder what happened to the 45 percent who did not vote. I wonder what those who accepted a kilo of rice, a pack of noodles and P200 were thinking when they sold their votes. I wonder how those who perpetrated fraud can now boast about it.

Politics is vicious. I have seen it for myself. The people whom my mother considered to be her friends destroyed her.

If electoral cheating, turncoatism and betrayal happen in the smallest political unit of the country, I am not surprised that such things happen on a national scale.

John Mychal A. Feraren, 18, is a sophomore at the University of the Philippines in Los Baños.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

Palace 'payola' a bigger bomb

WHAT HAPPENED LAST OCT. 11 was a blast more disastrous and catastrophic than the Oct. 19 explosion in Glorietta 2, which killed 11 persons. That disaster in Malacañang, where money changed hands among the elite, undoubtedly killed the faith and trust of millions of Filipinos in their leaders, and it could have certainly killed also the dreams of young Filipinos because money that should have gone to their education was diverted and given to those who already have.

Amando Doronila aptly described the explosion in the Palace in his Oct. 17 column: "Last Thursday, Malacañang resembled a feeding trough of a piggy farm when 190 congressmen and 48 provincial governors assembled to

receive cash gifts ranging from P200,000 to P500,000 each..."

It would be timely to quote again Oliver Goldsmith's "The Deserter Village":

"Ill fares the land; to hast'ning ills a prey.

Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

One notes also the Inquirer's Oct. 17 editorial cartoon, which in its own inimitable but incisive manner captured the essence of what happened in Malacañang last Oct. 11: The figure of Gov. Ed Panlilio, holding a bag marked "25 million," stands before what looks like a medieval rampart with a Malacañang sign, asking this question: "What's this for?" and somebody (like Banquo's voice reminding us of "something rotten in Den-

mark?") answers from behind the door:

"It's called a BRIBE, Father. And where you are it's called POLITICS."

One is reminded of the social scientist Harold D. Lasswell, who famously defined politics thus: "Who gets what, when and how?"—and how! We can only say that what happened last Oct. 11 in Malacañang was "a flagrant and arrogant scandal," to borrow the words of retired Justice Isagani A. Cruz in his Oct. 21 column.

—EDMUNDO HOLAZO
ESCALANTE,
former president,
IBP Sorsogon Chapter

Prick the conscience of politicians?

THAT POOR, NOBLE SOUL named Conrado de Quiros can pummel politicians with precise and descriptive words like "shameless," "insatiable," "plunderers," "thieves," "shysters," "rapists," etc. But if his purpose is to prick their conscience then his efforts are in vain. Only the naive can grant politicians something that is akin to conscience.

If his purpose is to rouse the people from their "slumber" by telling them that they are being screwed, he could be wrong again. By the look of things, the people are not asleep. They are just closing their eyes, the better to fully savor the pleasure of being raped.

If the people appear to be groaning, wailing and gasping for breath, it is not because they are clamoring for relief, respite or rescue. They probably are just petitioning the heavens for new

rapists. The people slept with Marcos for 20 years; when they got bored with him, they cuddled up to the "Kamaganaks," then slept with a sleek operator, then caroused with a buffoon.

Now they are blatantly flirting with the aggregate embodiment of all the previous gangs, who is taking liberties not only with their taxes and lives but also with their sensibilities. So? Well, part of the population is glued to TV, lapping up the latest gossip thrown up by those ugly deviants; another is picking noses while morosely staring at stupid commercials, while the rest doesn't give a damn.

Meantime my most admired columnist is beseeching the heavens for answers as to why the people seem so numb to the abuse—

—A.M. TAYQ,
rafaella_ml@yahoo.com

Mariannet's death is Arroyo's fault

THIS IS A REACTION ON THE news item "Girl, 12, loses hope, hangs herself" (INQUIRER, 11/8/07)

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's insensitive regime should be held responsible for indirectly causing Mariannet Amper's suicide. Her death comes at a time when government spin doctors want us to believe that the Philippine economy is improving.

It took a Mariannet to make us realize that the Arroyo administration is duping us—lying through its teeth—into believing the country's much-ballyhooed yet generally unfulfilled economic miracles. We have been bombarded with advertisements showing ordinary Filipinos boastfully claiming that they could already strongly feel (*random na random*) the country's economic progress. Unfortunately, Mariannet failed to benefit from Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's trumpeted "economic progress." This poor child would

not have taken her life if she had felt that things were getting better as GMA and her underlings would want us to believe.

Mariannet's death makes us cry for our poor and seemingly hopeless nation. But, more importantly, it gives us more reason to clamor for the ouster of a regime, which aside from being of doubtful legitimacy, has miserably failed to solve the extreme hunger, poverty and sense of deprivation and hopelessness gripping the majority of Filipinos.

Mourn if we must for Mariannet, but we can do her and other Filipino children a greater service if we will help remove the biggest impediment to genuine economic progress: the illegitimate, insensitive and corrupt-to-the-bones Arroyo regime. Our battle cry should be: Justice for Mariannet! Justice to the people! Oust Gloria!

—DAVID MICHAEL M. SAN JUAN,
dmsanjuanMM3@yahoo.com

Filipinos can learn from Musharraf

THE EDITORIAL "ONCE A DICTATOR" (INQUIRER, 11/8/07) is regrettable, not only in its suggestion to take back the Congressional Medal of Achievement awarded by the Philippine Congress to Gen. Pervez Musharraf in 2005, but also in its failure to mention the general's achievements since he took power in 1999.

Better than his two successors (ex-Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif) did, General Musharraf has governed Pakistan with greater political and economic stability. He has also instituted many electoral reforms in Pakistan, the most important of which is the requirement that candidates be at least high school graduates.

Indeed, in a country so difficult to rule, such as Pakistan, where religion and politics are intertwined in people's daily life, and where its porous border with Afghanistan allows terrorists to enter it virtually unchallenged, it would surely take a strong leader to lead a country with nuclear capability and strong influence in the Islamic world.

It is more regrettable that the INQUIRER editorial suggested a false comparison between former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. Senator Aquino was jailed, tortured and assassinated—a true-to-form hero. But Bhutto was given an easy, fresh start to campaign for elections in 1987. She was elected to rule Pakistan twice—in 1988

and 1995; in both instances, her government was dismissed for inefficiency and corruption. She allowed her husband Asif Zardar Ali, known in Pakistan as "Mr. 10%," to meddle in lucrative government contracts and obtain kickbacks in the process.

During her term, she recognized the Taliban regime, which she knew was fanatical, oppressive and murderous, just to appease the ethnic Pashtun tribal leaders in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, who share an affinity with the Afghans. Not only did she waste her two opportunities to lead Pakistan, she disgraced the illustrious name of her father, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

It is unfair and unjust to instantly brand a strong leader a "dictator" without looking at his positive achievements. Even Indira Gandhi, at one time during her leadership of India (the world's biggest democracy), had to declare martial law.

We Filipinos take pride in our restored democracy since 1986, but 21 years since then, have we made much progress? Perhaps, we should examine our democracy first, see how brittle our democracy is, and notice how it is presently degenerating into anarchy, before we judge Musharraf, because there are many things to learn from his "benevolent" dictatorship.

—RONALD LARA,
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SSS contributions: forced investment

I READ THE LETTER OF THE Philippine Veterans Affairs Office about its shortcomings, specifically in addressing Virginia Tan's concern (INQUIRER, 10/20/07)

Like many workers today, my father had his share of unfaltering SSS deductions in his 24 years of service in several private companies. He retired in 2001 and began getting a fixed monthly pension.

Last year, somebody advised him that the pension he has been receiving might not be commensurate to the sum of contributions he had actually made. A close scrutiny of his records revealed that there was indeed a significant discrepancy between the records used to calculate his pension and the record of his total contribution.

We have since sent several requests and made numerous follow-ups at various SSS offices. It has been almost a year now, and we have yet to get a clear response to some very simple questions: Is an adjustment really due? If so, when will it be effected?

Sadly, a recent visit to our local SSS branch only reaffirmed our suspicion that nobody is taking responsibility for this oversight. We were just referred from one office to another without a clear sign that we have made progress with our claim. Maybe the SSS is hoping that we would just get tired of following up and give up.

I have been working in the private sector for over five years now and, as in my father's time, SSS deductions remain as certain as daylight, notwithstanding the rumors that the SSS may not be able to meet its members' claims in the future. I am deeply concerned that even if it does get its act together, the SSS can still give no guarantee that we, its members, will get a fair share of return from our investment—which we didn't choose to make in the first place.

—ALVIN RIBANO,
0175 Maraway,
Lipa City, Batangas

What's wrong, or right, with this picture?

WE RAISED A HOWL OVER "DESPERATE Housewives." We got 127,230 signatures traveling through cyberspace demanding and getting an apology and corrective action from the ABC network. In comparison, GMA will receive around 200 "I am sorry. You are evicted na" postcards. The slur on our medical schools deserved the protest but how come we can't raise as much outrage over the crippling blows dealt by dirty politics?

There are pockets of protest. Steady cyberspace "manduranga" Vicente "Enteng" Romano continues to mobilize this new frontier. Harvey S. Reh is drumming up support for embattled Father-Governor Ed of Pampanga who is being isolated by his provincial board (Are they probably missing the "pitance"?). As of November 14, some 1,700 "strangers in cyberspace" have e-mailed heartwarming support.

"Crimes against the people" come thick and fast with none solved: Hello Garci, Lingang Bedol, extra-judicial killings and disappearances. In terms of money, a reader has listed some for us: the P1.3-billion election computerization contract, the alleged P532-million overpricing of Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard, the P200-million Jose Pidal case, the \$500-million North Rail Project, Bolante and the P728-million fertilizer scam. The latest mind-blowers are the \$329-million NBN-ZTE deal, the six-figure cash gifts to congresspersons and governors in Malacañang and the lightning Estrada pardon—not to mention the millions per congressman!

We get breathless just naming the above. Meanwhile, GMA keeps asking us to "move on" and helplessly we cover our noses at the stink remains on the wayside. If I were a cartoonist I would draw her surfing a crest while below her are Juan and Juana de la Cruz drowning in a tsunami undertow with deadly debris. We hardly meet anybody who is not bewailing the state of affairs. As with



TRANSPORT workers stage a motorcade rally at the LTO office earlier this month.

FILE PHOTO

Also look at passenger comfort, not just transport fares

THE GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN in to the demand of jeepney operators and drivers to raise fares. How about compelling them to comply with safety and capacity requirements for the passengers' sake?

Nowadays, jeepney passengers have to bear with callous drivers who don't care at all about passenger safety and convenience. Four-

teen-seat passenger jeepneys are packed to accommodate 16 passengers, and on rush hours even 18 passengers. Jeepneys should be required to carry a big sign as to their standard seating capacity.

Also, long jeepneys are always the cause of traffic jams because they are driven at a very slow pace—making a mockery of the "moving traffic" concept being

pushed by MMDA Chairman Bayani Fernando—as their drivers hope to pick up more passengers

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, before granting the request of jeepney operators and drivers, should have looked into this problem

—RAUL LORETO,
rauloreto@yahoo.com

3 basic ingredients of good government

IN VIEW OF THE RAPIDLY DETERIORATING state of affairs in our nation, allow me to tell this story about Confucius, the great Chinese philosopher (551-479 B.C.)

A disciple of Confucius asked the master, "What are the basic ingredients of a good government?"

Confucius answered, "First sufficient food; next, sufficient weapons; and last, the confidence of the people."

"But," continued the disciple, "suppose then that you had to dispense with one of these three things, which would you forgo?"

"Weapons," said the master.

"Suppose then that you were forced to choose between one of the two left, which would you forgo?" the disciple persisted.

Confucius answered, "Food. From of old, death has been the lot of all men, but a people that no

longer trusts its rulers is lost, indeed." ("1000 Stones You Can Use" by Frank Mihalic)

One will find that in the Philippines, the first two ingredients mentioned in the narrative—food and weapons—have become deplorably scarce and inferior.

SWS' latest survey showed that 21.5 percent of our population, that is 3.8 million Filipino families, suffered hunger in the past three months. As to weapons, those in the arsenal of our Armed Forces have been shown to be substandard. Look, for example, at what happened to the 14 Marines who were ambushed in Basilan last July 20, 2007. It turned out that most of the mortar shells they had with them were duds. This is not to mention the obsolete Huey helicopters, of Vietnam War vintage, donated to our government by the Pentagon.

Alas, what is worse is that even the third and last ingredient that Confucius considered the most vital for good government—confidence of the people—is now alarmingly at its lowest ebb in this tiny republic. The reason for this?

Human rights violations (extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances) which have effectively ranked the Philippines just a few notches below the military junta-ruled Burma, the various scandals so strikingly linked with the present administration, the "Hello Garci" scandal, the NBN-ZTE mess and, the latest, the "cash gifts" to congressmen and local leaders right in Malacañang, and the highly controversial pardon granted by President Macapagal-Arroyo to Joseph Estrada.

—ROGELIO C. BARCELONA,

23 Sitio Fatima, Hinman Road, Barangay Pasong Tamo, QC

The Ombudsman should be ashamed that the country has not improved in Transparency International's assessment. That means she and her office have done nothing to reduce corruption, yet she is claiming success.

For as long as the Office of the Ombudsman and the Commission on Audit continue to be corrupt,

graft and corruption will always be with us and our people will likewise continue to suffer.

Armed insurgency will continue for as long as corruption continues. Insurgents use the issue of rampant corruption to justify their call for change of government.

—LIGORIO GM NAVAL,

114-B Alinsa, Bacoor, Cavite

COMMENTARY

Asuncion David Maramba

Mariel Francisco and former Ombudsman Simeon Marcial, the stress is getting into our marrow. Z.C. Beltran writes: "my mind is in a shambles, my knees are shaking and my stomach is churning out of anger."

But we survive. Mooto Baluyot says, "business has a life of its own." And so it seems do our poor and many of us. It's as if we can go on indefinitely with or without a leader.

Unfortunately, we also forget. Estrada, again lustily greeted by crowds, is strutting like a presidential peacock. Senator Villar and others have sided to his side. For two seasons, no rice has been planted in stretches of rice fields in our hometown. The irrigation system is "broken" and the long-suffering farmers don't know how to go after their congressman. And how come a very religious community like ours had a mere 20 percent turn-out in the Oct. 29 barangay elections, followed by the usual accusations and counter-accusations of cheating and herding? The question has already been asked: Why is the most Christian country in Asia also the most corrupt?

And then Mariannet Amper happened! That the Church quibbled over her funeral rites is dismaying. Is the Church captive to the letter of Canon Law rather than to the spirit of the compassionate Shepherd whose calling is to gather and not to separate? The Church relented but only after she hesitated over the final rites for a real and symbolic victim of poverty, a 12-year-old girl whose continued absence from school (and who knows what else) broke her heart and her

—

But bishop Francisco Claver S.J.'s candor

(INQUIRER 11/9/07) about bishops discussing and disagreeing is so refreshing. At the very least it shows a collegial body coming to grips with issues and not just keeping a solid front at all cost and at all times. Facades no longer fool adults.

Realpolitik has some things to say. First, columnist Antonio Abaya writes that we have no more options: not impeachment, coup, a caretaker junta, snap elections, resign-at, people power. Only one alternative remains: a new public figure with clear moral ascendancy. Second, we have no more public servants with heroic and noble proportions, only clowns, corrupt and corrupting politicians and their dynasties. Even the Sangguniang Kabataan is early training ground for dirty tricks, not public service. "We have lost our magic." We're wandering in a desert and there is no "Little Prince" to open our eyes. But third, there are still heroic men around

Putting climate change refugees on the map

VALENCIA, SPAIN—EVEN AS UN CLIMATE scientists here debate the fine print of a report designed to help forestall the ravages of global warming, a new class of victims has already emerged.

Call them climate refugees. They are a reality, and yet they do not exist—at least not in the nomenclature of the international organizations set up to protect the rights and dignity of the world's most vulnerable people.

Because they flee environments made uninhabitable by shifting weather patterns or rising seas rather than political persecution or war, these refugees slip between the cracks into a bureaucratic gray zone.

However, an unlikely band of French photographers and journalists is bearing witness to the devastating impact of rising global temperatures on the daily lives of ordinary people.

After four years wandering the globe, from the dust bowl that used to be Lake Chad to the melting permafrost of Alaska to the sinking island paradise of Tuvalu, the Argos Collective has put the fruit of

their investigations between covers.

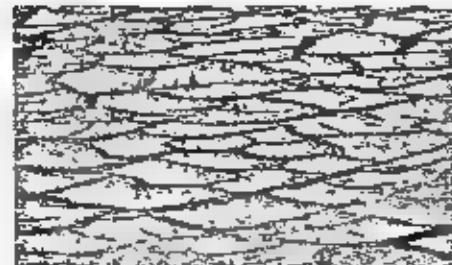
Already published in French and soon to appear in English, "Climate Refugees" published by Infolio is the first book devoted exclusively to showing the consequences of climate change up close and personal.

Using the massive 2,500-page report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the scientists who wrote it as their guides, the Argos Collective pinpointed nine locales in which global warming has played at least a major role in making life difficult, if not unbearable.

"Our job is to tell stories we have heard and bear witness to what we have seen," said Guy-Pierre Chomette, one of the collective's three writers and six photographers, all freelance.

"The science was already there when we started in 2004, but we wanted to emphasize the human dimension of the problem, especially for those most vulnerable," he said.

Starting with a single magazine assignment, the collective gradually at-



Exposed mud banks at the Fervenza reservoir in Dumbría, Spain, where the water is far below usual levels. AP PHOTO

tracted government and corporate backing for the project.

Gripping narratives

The narratives were rendered all the more gripping by the dignity of those profiled.

There was Mina, an Inupiaq from the tiny hamlet of Shishmaref in Alaska, watching the waves drag her house into the sea at a time of year—late October—when the ocean should have already frozen over.

Temperatures near the Arctic have risen faster than anywhere in the world, and the result has been the rapid melting of an entire ecosystem.

Mina remembered playing checkers with her grandfather 30 years ago, when the house was a safe 100 meters from the sea. Soon the entire village, perched on a shrinking island, will disappear.

Also profiled were Uncle Manruan and his wife, living in a dirt house on a dune struggling to hold back the brackish water of the mangroves that spread like tentacles along the coast of Bangladesh.

The invasion of salt water has long ago killed off their rice fields and cows, and the couple now subsist by working on shrimp farms and foraging in the privately-owned mangroves.

Nearly 300 million people live in these delicately balanced flood plains throughout Asia.

There are "many factors that could cause populations to leave the regions where they live, and to become climate refugees," Jean Jouzel, France's fore-

most climate scientist, said in an introduction to the book.

Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, New York, cited the war in Sudan's Darfur as an example where climate change had already driven a badly stressed region over the brink.

"Darfur is a place that has had about one third of its usual precipitation over the last 50 years; it's also had a big increase in population at the same time, so it is being squeezed badly between falling water availability and rising population," he told Agence France Presse.

"We're going to see a lot of that in the future, because there are a lot of poor, fragile, conflict-ridden or conflict-prone areas, especially in the dry lands, that are likely to be in the line of fire, as it were, of climate change."

The Argos Collective has not yet decided whose stories to tell next, but they will be related to the environment. "There are too many stories to be told," Chomette said. AFP

Climate change imperils decades of Asia progress

From page A1

region were already feeling the effects of climate change. These communities face a dire future unless the international community acts at next month's climate change meetings in Bali, Indonesia, to control rising greenhouse gases.

"Before the Bali meeting, we must make our voices heard and demand international leaders take urgent and ambitious action while placing climate change at the heart of their plans," Saleem Hug, head of climate change for the London-based International Institute for Environment and Development, said in a statement.

"Without this, Asia's vulnerable will continue to suffer, as will communities worldwide who are contributing least to climate change but continuing to suffer the most," he said.

The report by 35 private organizations, including the humanitarian group Oxfam and environmental group Greenpeace, comes two days after the Intergovernmental Panel on

ing poverty but lies on the frontline of impacts from climate change," said coauthor Andrew Simms.

"Now if it follows a fossil-fueled Western economic development path, it will set in train an irreversible course of events that will guarantee a great reversal in its own progress," added Simms of the New Economics Foundation.

The Up in Smoke report painted a portrait of communities already struggling to adapt to changing weather patterns.

Over half of Asia's four billion-strong population lives near coasts, putting them in danger from rises in sea levels, while more extreme weather patterns threaten the whole region, according to the report.

Droughts are on the rise in China and India, while Bangladesh has been hit by worsening floods and natural disasters, including Tropical Cyclone Sidr which recently killed thousands of people.

Pacific island villages have been forced to relocate because of rising sea levels while melting glaciers have con-

tributed to a decline in runoff to countries that depend on them for drinking water and irrigation.

Moving away from coal

The report urged India and China, the region's two biggest economies and emerging global giants, to move away from coal in favor of renewable power that could provide them with long-term energy security.

Chinese agricultural productivity will fall by 5-10 percent if no action is taken, with the production of wheat, rice and corn decreasing by up to 37 percent in the second half of this century, according to the report.

India could be threatened by energy and food supply insecurity, reduced fresh water supplies and increases in extreme weather events, the report said.

Calls to rich countries

The Up in Smoke report called on rich industrialized nations to act "first and fastest" in committing to make

mandatory cuts in greenhouse gases and do more to provide green technologies to the developing world.

"To prevent catastrophic global warming, the only feasible alternative is for wealthy countries to dramatically reduce their 'luxury' greenhouse gas emissions, so that the 'survival' emissions of people in poor countries do not cause disaster," Simms said.

The report also called on rich countries to provide more financial resources to help poor communities cope with global warming. Disaster preparedness should also be better funded and organized.

"The ongoing erratic weather conditions experienced around the world mean a daily struggle for the millions of poor people who rely on the land and sea for their survival," Oxfam International's Bert Maerten said in a statement.

"Oxfam wants to see governments taking both mitigation and adaptation efforts seriously now and in the future." Reports from AP and AFP

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Across the NATION

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MILF allays MNLF fears on new pact

Rebel leaders extend hand of unity to rival guerrillas

COTABATO CITY—THE MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT (MILF) is reaching out to leaders of its rival group, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), following an agreement that the MILF reached with government negotiators to set up a separate entity that could encroach on territory that was put under MNLF jurisdiction under the 1996 peace agreement.

The MILF said it was also trying to talk with the MNLF to consolidate the two groups' positions on key issues that have impact on the lives of Moro people in Mindanao.

Khaled Musa, MILF deputy chair for information, said that even before Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita called for a united MILF-MNLF, his group had been reaching out "to our brethren to have a common stand on Mindanao issues that affect Moro people."

United stand

He said the MILF needed the support of every Muslim for the peace process to succeed.

Ermita said on Sunday the MNLF would have to eventually sit down with its former breakaway group, the MILF, to unify their concepts of a Bangsamoro Autonomous Government.

"The two of them would have to talk because they will represent the Bangsamoro Autonomous Government. There could not be separate Bangsamoro concepts of the MNLF and MILF," Ermita was quoted as saying.

"We are inclusive in case we succeed to sign a peace deal with the government, because the peace deal is not for the MILF alone," Musa said in a statement.

In the past, MILF and MNLF leaders had met on several occasions in efforts to put up a unified front that would deal with the government in achieving peace in Mindanao.

Those meetings were fruitless as then MNLF chair Nur Misuari and the late MILF chair Hashim Salamat failed to settle differences.

Musa said the MILF stance in the final peace agreement being hammered out was for complete implementation but stressed that the MILF central committee was convinced it did not solve the so-called Bangsamoro problem.

"After all, we cannot have two ARMMs. We should take a look at the area being considered in this negotiation. Of course, we have to go back to (Republic Act No.) 9054 and our constitutional process," Ermita said.

Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao



MOTORISTS in Legazpi City brave the flooded Rizal Street in Legazpi City following intermittent rains since Sunday.

Evacuation urged as new storm nears

CEBU CITY OFFICIALS asked people living along rivers and in landslide-prone areas to move out as a low-pressure area became a storm yesterday.

Signal No. 1 was hoisted over Cebu, Bohol, Negros provinces, Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Iloilo, Leyte provinces, Dinagat Island, Western Samar, Eastern Samar, Biliran Island, and Surigao del Norte.

Tabada urged people residing along riverbanks and landslide-prone areas to evacuate.

Oscar Tabada, chief of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration in Mactan, said tropical depression "Lando" was expected to slam into Cebu last night.

As of noon yesterday, Lando was estimated at 30 kilometers east-southeast of Surigao City.

It had maximum winds of 55 km per hour near the center and was moving west-northwest at a speed of 13 kph.

On Tuesday morning, Cruz said the flooding was caused by the swelling of the Tubod and Man-dulog rivers.

Armando Edroso, team leader of the disaster coordinating center, said mudflow blocked portions of Barangay San Roque.

On Sunday night, Cruz called on residents near river banks to evacuate to higher grounds.

Francisco Barredo,

northwest of Iloilo City by Wednesday morning, and 220 km northwest of Puerto Princesa City by Thursday.

Tabada urged people residing along riverbanks and landslide-prone areas to evacuate.

In Catanduanes, landslides occurred in Barangay Balongbong in Bato town and rock slides between Barangays Banog-Banog and Asqad in San Andres town, the Office of Civil Defense reported.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau has identified Catanduanes as most prone to landslides among the Bicol provinces.

Landslides in Barangay Mataas in Cagraray Island, Bacacay, Albay, blocked a river channel, causing water to overflow to residential areas.

It prompted the

evacuation of residents, said Cedric Daep, executive officer of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council.

Another landside was reported in Manito town in Albay, said Daep in a mobile phone interview.

Gov. Joey Sa-ceda suspended classes in all levels Monday.

Daep said traces of new volcanic debris were seen in Barangay Maipon, Gunobatan, where hundreds of people died when lahar and debris from Mayon volcano were washed down by heavy rains at the height of Super Typhoon "Reming."

Ricardo V. Umel and Julie S. Alpata, Inquirer Mindanao; Jhunex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas; and Ephraim Aguilar and Jaymee Garnil, Inquirer Southern Luzon

WWII mass rape victims now ill

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CANDABA, PAMPANGA—Lola (grandmother) Lasya, Tarsing, Lucing, Saryong, Toreng, Meren, Ester, Hening, Kita, Maria, Paring, Ana.

By the time Isabeina Vinuya was finished with her counting—slowed down by faltering memory—her tally of ailing women stopped at 30.

"Nakarataay na sila (They're bedridden now)," Vinuya, 73, said on Saturday of the survivors of mass rape by Japanese soldiers.

The soldiers belonged to the Geki Group of the 14th District Army under Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita, according to archival documents submitted to the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal in Tokyo, Japan, on Dec. 8-12, 2000.

The abuse happened after soldiers attacked Mapanique, a suspected bailiwick of the Filipino rebel army, the Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon, on Nov. 23, 1944.

In terms not stated in Operations Order A-46, the soldiers pillaged and burned the village, killed all men and boys whose corpses were thrown into a common grave that was set on fire in full view of their grandmothers, mothers, aunts, sisters and daughters.

The soldiers herded the women and the girls to their garrison, the Ilusurio Mansion (also called the Bahay na Pula), in San Ildefonso, Bulacan, more than a kilometer south of Mapanique.

The 96 survivors, who first broke their silence about this World War II's dark and se-

cret past in August 1996, related the ordeal in a song they composed as a group.

With 34 women dead in the past decade and 30 more ill by now, the women—called the Malaya Lola (Free Grandmothers)—have only 32 women to continue their quest for justice, Vinuya said.

Most are afflicted with diabetes, tuberculosis, asthma and arthritis that go mostly untreated, except for contributions come.

A Japanese student, known here as Chesko, brought an acupuncturist before she left in August for a research on comfort women in South Korea.

Tarcila Sampang and Ana Alonso, who are among those who never married, are cared for by relatives and still healthy among the Malaya Lola.

Those who still try to eke out a living by farming saw newly planted palay ruined by Friday's flash floods in the village. "Wala, sira lahat ang isinabog (The seeds are gone, all damaged)," said Vinuya.

What went down the drain amounted to P4,800 a hectare. A sack of certified palay cost P800 and every hectare needed at least six sacks of seeds.

On Saturday, Gov. Eddie Panfilio sent his office's social services coordinator to help the Malaya Lola assess their needs.

Medical missions and food assistance have been planned this December. The Philippine Health Insurance Corp. policies of the 62 survivors are being processed for renewal.

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THIS grave, where the burnt

remains of more than 100 men and boys were transferred in 2004, is a mute witness to the pillage and burning of Mapanique in Candaba, Pampanga, and the massacre of men and boys there on Nov. 23, 1944, and the succeeding mass rape of women by Japanese soldiers.

The soldiers belonged to the Geki Group of the 14th District Army under Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita, according to archival documents submitted to the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal in Tokyo, Japan, on Dec. 8-12, 2000.

The abuse happened after soldiers attacked Mapanique, a suspected bailiwick of the Filipino rebel army, the Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon, on Nov. 23, 1944.

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The 96 survivors, who first broke their silence about this World War II's dark and se-

JOURNALIST LOS BANOS SOUTHERN LUZON

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2007

Across the NATION

A7



STUDENTS of the Paganjan Central School seem eager to see former President Joseph Estrada. They say they were required by their teachers to welcome Estrada and wear uniforms even if Estrada's visit fell on a Saturday. NIÑA CATHERINE CALLEJA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Estrada trains guns on FVR at Laguna sortie

BINAN, LAGUNA—CONVICTED PLUNDERER Joseph Estrada declared that he was ready to be jailed if the government and the Sandiganbayan insisted on seizing his assets.

In his first visit to his home province since he was ousted in a popular uprising in 2001, Estrada lambasted the administration and his political foes, particularly his predecessor, former President Fidel Ramos.

"This administration has always been intimidating me. Now, they are again threatening me with imprisonment because I am opposing the plan of the Sandiganbayan to take away my properties. Well, I'm not afraid of them," Estrada told a crowd of about 3,000 people who gathered at the town plaza.

No names

Although he let out his disgust over how the government and the court handled his plunder case, the movie actor-turned-president did not mention the name of President Macapagal-Arroyo even once in his 18-minute speech.

"I know I couldn't expect justice from this administration," he said.

Estrada said he would not surrender pieces of his property that he acquired before he entered politics as mayor of San Juan in the 1970s.

"I acquired them from my work as an actor. While others became rich only after they became congressmen, Comelec (Commission on Elections) commissioner or senator, I owned my house in (San Juan) and my rest house in Tanay even before I became mayor. I didn't steal it," he said.

Wearing his signature denim jacket and white wristband with the emblem of the "President of the Republic of the Philippines" printed on it, Estrada repeatedly professed innocence of plunder.

Connivance

He said his ouster and conviction were part of a plot by "those in power now" and "rich businessmen and some (Catholic) bishops and members of the military."

He blamed the media for allegedly being an instrument of the "rich" to oust him from power.

While Estrada was careful in directly attacking Ms Arroyo, he openly criticized Ramos, who questioned Ms Arroyo's pardon to Estrada.

Estrada said he would divulge irregularities in government contracts during the Ramos administration "in the coming days."

When reporters asked him during a brief news conference what he was referring to, he just answered: "Something explosive."

He went on to mention the controversial government projects that the Ramos administration entered into like the P8-billion Centennial Expo Park in Clark Field, Pampanga, the questionable sale of government corporations such as Petron and Alabang Stock Farms; and the awarding of contracts to 20 independent power producers.

PEA-Amari

Estrada likewise mentioned the anomalous PEA-Amari land deal which he described as the "grandmother of all scams."

But, he said, the most contentious project of the Ramos administration was the sale of hundreds of hectares of prime lots within the Fort Bonifacio military reservation.

Estrada, who was then vice president, said that while Ramos boasted that the funds generated from the transaction would finance the military modernization program, the money was diverted to the general fund of the government. Marlon Ramos and Niña Catherine Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon

DA rejects request to back ban on GMOs

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture has refused the request of Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon for support for a provincial board resolution banning genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the province.

The refusal was contained in a letter sent recently to Marañon, said Patrick Belisario, executive director of the Negros Island Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Foundation Inc.

Agriculture Undersecretary Bernie Pondeville, in his letter

to Marañon, explained that the DA could not ban genetically modified products that have been approved and declared safe, Belisario said in an interview on Monday.

The banning of GMOs runs counter to the national policy of promoting safe and responsible use of modern biotechnology, Pondeville had said.

Marañon is seeking the active participation and support of the DA in imposing the ban on the entry, importation, growing, planting, selling and trading of genetically modified plants and animals in Negros Occidental.

A provincial board resolution

bans the entry of living GMOs, as well as experimentation and field-testing related to it.

It also bans the planting, growing, selling or trading of living GMOs, which are believed to be toxic to humans and animals.

The resolution was in line with Negros Occidental's plan to become the country's first organic food island.

While the DA respects the province's decision to ban GMOs, Pondeville said the agency could not go against the national policy set by President Macapagal-Arroyo in July 2001.

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F D N R

FILIPINO DEMOCRATIC NATIONALIST REFORM MOVEMENT

SERVES NOTICE TO ALL FILIPINOS THAT

"The Armed Forces of the Philippines is the protector of the people and the State. Art. 2 Sec 3, 1987 Philippine Constitution

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. —Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government." United States Declaration of Independence

UNDER THE GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO REGIME

Telecom Franchise Bill/Pico Marcelo Expose – Bing Rodrigo Expose – Code NGO Scandal – PCSO Robert Rivero Expose/PCSO Funding of Election 2001 – FG Cronies Heads of Cash Rich Agencies – Epira Law/PPA Imposition/Ilaw sa Barangay Payola – Piatco Naia III Fiasco – Coconut Levy Deal – Impsa Deal/Coutts Bank Account – Solicited Contribution from Mark Jimenez – Reneged International Commitment in Iraq – Murder of Col. Panfilo Villaruel – Unceremonious Removal of VP Guingona as DFA Head – Harassment and or Torture of Administration Critics – Macapagal Blvd. Overpricing Unresolved Due to Closure of PEA – PAGCOR Huge Illegal Contracts, Unaudited Astronomical Funds – Jose Pidal Bank Accounts/Eugenio Mahusay Jr. Abduction – Resignation of Cabinet Members/Hyatt 10 – Venable "Bert Gonzales" Contract – Foreign Expansionism/Balkanization of Mindanao – Esperat Murder/Jocjoc Bolante Scam – Road Users Tax Napocor Resources DFA Budget DPWH Finances NEA Money etc Used As Campaign Funds – Election 2004 Fraud/Hello Garci Tapes/Illegitimate Presidency – Killing of Impeachment 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007 Through Bribery – State Terrorism "CPR", Proc. 1017, EO 464 Davao Airport Bombing,– Basilan Mutilation of Soldiers – Extrajudicial Killings – Jonas Burgos et. al Disappearances – Election 2007 Fraud Repeat & Lintang Bedol – Northrail Contract / ZTE NBN Deal/ Cybered Project/JPEPA – Gargantuan National Debt – Chacha Overtures – Large-scale Bribery & Immorality/500,000 Irregular Cash Gifts As Exposed by Gov. Among Ed Panlilio – Pardon of Estrada – Marine Officers' (Generals Miranda, Lim, et. al) & Soldiers' Continued Detention Without Proper Charges – Preparatory to More Grim Scenarios/Glorietta Explosion/Batasan Bombing, and more...and more... ad infinitum

THE LONG TRAIN OF ABUSES, USURPATIONS AND DESPOTISM HAVE BEEN INFILCTED. WE, THE FILIPINO PEOPLE, DECLARE WAR AGAINST ALL THESE OPPRESSION, CRIMES & EVIL BY THE GLORIA ARROYO GOVERNMENT AND CALL FOR ITS IMMEDIATE STOP. OUR SUFFERANCE IS ENOUGH!

FILIPINO DEMOCRATIC NATIONALIST REFORM MOVEMENT (FDNR)

November 20, 2007

www.pcaph.org – 09266583004 / 09198749032



Good Education, the Expat Pinoys' Most Precious Gift

Ma. Trinia Asuncion considers their family's circumstance as far from ideal - with her father needing to go abroad to be able to provide for them. But Trinia chose to rise above this circumstance by "Using it to inspire me and strive through life". To succeed and probably cut the chain of goodbyes when "I will not have to leave this country to (fend) for my own family".

Trinia is the daughter of Andres Asuncion, an oil refinery control operator in Oman. She is a grade school valedictorian, high school valedictorian and a college scholar at the UP Intarmed College of

Medicine.

She is one of the awardees in BPI's Search for 10 Outstanding Expat Pinoy Children for 2007.

The Bank of the Philippine Islands has been exceptionally active in reaching out to our kababayans abroad in the last five years and has in the process been immersed in the stories of success and failures of Filipinos working abroad. It is not uncommon to find sad stories of shattered dreams and uncertain futures. But there are beautiful stories of little triumphs and victories won. The sweetest of which are those that involve the very reason

for their struggles away from home - their children and their families.

The Search represents the Bank's commitment to promoting the value of education, culture of excellence, and nationalistic pride among our *Expat Pinoy* children, helping them realize the magnitude of their parents' contribution to the country, but more importantly, to their future.

With this, BPI aims to inspire these children to achieve their dreams, which are the driving force of their parents' toils and endless diligence abroad. Inspiringly, the *Expat Pinoy*s find their

validation as good parents when they see their children excel and be honored in a prestigious contest.

All these kids are proudly excellent students, class valedictorians, dean's listers, academic achievers and consistent honor students. But more significant than the school records that they have set for themselves is how they believe in their hearts that the best contribution they could give this country and the parent working abroad is to take their studies seriously.

Good education, they agree, is their most potent weapon in bat-

tling though this life successfully. Thankfully, each of these kids realize that their good education is a product of their parents' hard work abroad, and perhaps the most precious gift they can ever receive from them.

On the whole, the Search also seeks to bring to the forefront of public consciousness the value to the community of the *Expat Pinoy*s and their families, and the extent to which BPI can demonstrate its deep appreciation for their sacrifices. Same reason why BPI is today's No.1 Bank in OFW Remittances.

Outstanding Children Proud Expat Pinoy Parents



These outstanding children have brought honor to their parents. A great reward for all the sacrifices their parents have made abroad. The fulfillment of the *Expat Pinoy*s' dream of seeing their children happy and successful. BPI shares this joy and salutes the *Expat Pinoy* parents and their outstanding children.

10 Outstanding Expat Pinoy Children

Expat Pinoy Children



Name • School (Parent • Country of assignment) 1. Maria Trinia S. Asuncion UP Manila College of Medicine (Andres E. Asuncion OMAN) 2. Soleil C. Ponce Adamson University (Manuel I. Ponce KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA) 3. Neil Stephen A. Lopez De La Salle University (Noel C. Lopez INDONESIA) 4. Inri I. Villaluna University of the Philippines in the Visayas (Danilo L. Villa JAPAN) 5. Mary Grace E. Pascua Makati Science High School (Jesus E. Pascua SAUDI ARABIA) 6. Mark Lester B. Cervantes University of Perpetual Help System-DALTA (Rico Mercurio Cervantes DUBAI, UAE) 7. Loril Marriel B. Villar Ateneo de Manila University (Ismael J. Villar DUBAI, UAE) 8. Jonathan B. Bantigue Philippine Science High School (Vivencio M. Bantigue RUSSIA) 9. Martha Rhodora N. Agang Far Eastern University (Rodrigo G. Agang SUDAN, SOUTH AFRICA) 10. Kristine Anne A. Lopez Ateneo de Manila University (Noel C. Lopez, INDONESIA)

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bangladesh cyclone toll nears 3,000

WORLD BRIEFS

US secretly helping Musharraf guard nukes

WASHINGTON—The United States is helping Pakistan keep its nuclear weapons secure in a top-secret program that has cost Washington almost \$100 million since 2001, The New York Times reported Sunday. But Pakistan still refuses to allow US experts into its nuclear sites, the newspaper said, revealing information it first obtained three years ago but, due to a White House request, had not reported until now. Debate is intensifying here about whether Pakistan's reluctance to reveal "critical details" about its arsenal has undercut the cooperation's effectiveness, the report said. Without addressing the report's substance, White House National Security Council spokesperson Gordon Johndroe told AFP: "At this time, we believe that Pakistan's nuclear weapons and facilities are under the appropriate control of Pakistani authorities." The US program was reportedly created after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, when the United States enlisted President Pervez Musharraf as the main ally in its "war on terror." Pakistan has been in turmoil since General Musharraf imposed a state of emergency two weeks ago. **APF**

Study links drop in test scores to decline in reading
 Harry Potter, James Patterson and Oprah Winfrey's book club aside, Americans—particularly young Americans—appear to be reading less for fun, and as that happens, their reading test scores are declining. At the same time, performance in other academic disciplines like math and science is dipping for students whose access to books is limited, and employers are rating workers deficient in basic writing skills. That is the message of a new report being released Monday by the National Endowment for the Arts, based on an analysis of data from about two dozen studies from the federal Education and Labor Departments and the Census Bureau, as well as other academic, foundation and business surveys. Among the findings is that although reading scores among elementary school students have been improving, scores are flat among middle school students and slightly declining among high school seniors. These trends are concurrent with a fall-off in daily pleasure reading among young people as they progress from elementary to high school, a drop that appears to continue once they enter college. The data also showed that students who read for fun nearly every day performed better on reading tests than those who reported reading never or hardly at all. **NYT**

Asean leaders to confront Burma

SINGAPORE—Southeast Asian leaders Monday prepared to confront Burma (Myanmar) for the first time since the junta's crackdown on dissent, as the region faced mounting pressure to rein in its errant member state. Burma's Prime Minister Lieutenant General Thein Sein can expect a grilling in Singapore over the brutal response to mass pro-democracy protests in September, which claimed at least 15 lives and sparked global condemnation. **APF**

DHAKA—FOUR DAYS AFTER SUPER CYCLONE

Sidr killed more than 2,400 people in Bangladesh, rescuers were struggling to reach isolated areas along the country's devastated coast and give aid to millions of survivors.

"The tragedy unfolds as we walk through one after another devastated village," said relief operator Mohammad Selim in Bagerhat, one of the worst-hit areas. "Often it looks like we are in a valley of death."

Media reports and the chair of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, Mohammad Abdur Rob, said the death toll had already surpassed 3,000, and was likely to go up. The government put the official toll at 2,471 confirmed dead.

"We are trying to reach all the

affected areas on the vast coast line as soon as possible, when we will know how many people have exactly died in the devastation," one government official said.

While it will take several days to determine the number of dead and missing, some three million survivors, who were either evacuated from the low-lying southern coast or whose homes and villages were destroyed, will need support, the government said.

Aid workers fear inadequate supplies of food, drinking water

and medicine could lead to outbreaks of disease.

Grieving families begged for clothes to wrap around the bodies of dead relatives for burial. In some areas, they put corpses in mass graves.

Reuters reporters in the affected districts said bodies were being discovered by the hour in the rivers and paddy fields and under piles of debris.

Cyclone Sidr smashed into the coast of southern Bangladesh late on Thursday with 250 kph winds that whipped up a five-meter tidal surge.

In its wake, dead people and animals floated down rivers and the stench of death filled the air. Relatives tried to identify and bring them ashore, before burying them hurriedly

without proper ceremonies.

Military ships and helicopters were trying to reach thousands of people believed stranded on islands in the Bay of Bengal and in coastal areas still cut off by the devastating storm.

Officials in affected areas say the death toll given by the ministry is far below the real numbers. Aid agencies have said the toll could rise beyond 10,000.

"Some 2,000 people have died in my area alone," said Anwar Panchayet in Bagerhat district.

A huge effort was under way to get food, drinking water and shelter to the millions affected by the storm, the worst to hit disaster-prone Bangladesh since 1991 when nearly 143,000 people died in a cyclone and the tidal surge it triggered. **Reuters**

Court battle rages for Nina Wang's billions

HONG KONG—ONE OF ASIA'S biggest fortunes, left by Nina Wang—once the continent's richest woman—will probably be handled by an administrator while her feng shui master friend and her family battle in court for the \$12 billion.

The rival camps told a court on Monday they agreed in principle to an independent administrator, according to a lawyer for feng shui enthusiast and businessman Tony Chan, clearing the way for what is expected to be a heard and lengthy court case.

"It's an important and major step," Jonathan Midgley, Chan's lawyer, told Reuters.

Midgley said an estate ad-

ministrator was needed to ensure Wang's assets were "preserved" and "run efficiently" during the court case.

Chan claims to be the sole beneficiary of a will drafted last year by Wang as she was dying with cancer. But the Chunachem Charitable Foundation, run primarily by Wang's family, lays claim to an earlier 2002 will.

Wang, rated Asia's richest woman, was one of Hong Kong's most colorful tycoons nicknamed "little sweetie" for her braided pigtails, miniskirts and giggly persona.

Midgley said there seemed to be agreement between the parties, including Wang's nonagenarian

father-in-law Wang Din-shun, on having a court-appointed administrator to oversee the estate. But he said Wang's family needed more time to consider certain details.

"They're obliged to enter their next legal document in relation to the litigation on the 13th of December to stake this claim," Midgley said.

Judge Andrew Cheung adjourned the hearing until Dec. 10, when all parties will give an update on their positions.

Wang, ranked the 154th richest person in the world by Forbes magazine last year, was known for her eccentricities, including her self-professed stinginess.

Her life was touched by tragedy



WANG in an Oct. 17, 2005 photo
 in 1990 when her husband Teddy Wang was abducted and never seen alive again. **Reuters**

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WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Federer plays
idol Sampras
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SPORTS

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■ Jins eye
Olympic
berths anew
in Asian
qualifier /A26

Arum still wants 'dream fight'

Pacquiao-De La Hoya matchup sure blockbuster, says promoter

THE "DREAM FIGHT" PITTING MANNY PACQUIAO AGAINST the legendary Oscar De La Hoya is gaining steam.

No less than Top Rank's Bob Arum himself admitted yesterday that they are talking with Dela Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions about a possible clash between the two titans of prize fighting.

"I'm not the genius who thought of that idea," said Arum in an interview on dzSR Sports Radio 918 yesterday. "But the media liked it, and when I presented it to Richard Shaeffer of Golden Boy, he liked the idea."

The fight, however, raises eyebrows because of the huge disparity in the fighting weights of



PACQUIAO

DE LA HOYA

the two pay-per-view lords.

De La Hoya, who held world championship belts in four weight categories, fights in the 154-pound class. He started fighting, though, as a super featherweight (130 lbs.)

Pacquiao, who started as a flyweight (112 lbs.), fought as a super featherweight when he beat Marco Antonio Barrera last Oct. 6 in Las Vegas.

Thus far, pundits predict that the two fighters could meet at 147 lbs. or as welterweights.

Arum said a Pacquiao-De La Hoya fight "is

not out of the question" and that the fight could give the Filipino his biggest paycheck ever.

Meanwhile, Arum said he would present two options for Pacquiao's next fight in March—one against Juan Manuel Marquez and the

other against David Diaz.

Marquez is the reigning World Boxing Council super featherweight titlist, while Diaz holds the WBC lightweight crown.

Marc Anthony Reyes

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Amazing Protectors risk clean mark vs Road Kings

FIL-AM ACE GABE NORWOOD HOPES TO sustain Hapee Toothpaste's unbeaten run against Toyota Balintawak in the PBL V-Go Extreme Energy Drink Cup today at the Rizal Coliseum.

Norwood has been shuttling between practices for Hapee and the Harbour-Philippines Team since Saturday, but Hapee mentor Jun Noel believes that the celebrated Pit-Am is far from being a "burnout."

"We're not worried; I know coach Junel (Baculi) will take care of Norwood, he's a good coach," said. "And the team is very determined. They boys are really motivated, they just don't

want to lose."

"It's just more basketball; I'm up to the challenge," the 6-foot-5 Norwood said.

The Complete Protectors will vie for their sixth straight win at 4 p.m. to solidify their bid for an outright semifinal berth.

Harbour Centre, running second at 5-1, also aims to boost its stock against a streaking Mail and More at 2 p.m.

Both Hapee and Harbour Centre have secured slots in Pool A, where the top three teams in the first round will fight for the two outright semifinal spots.

Toyota Balintawak and Mail and More also

STANDINGS	W	L
Hapee	5	0
Harbour	5	1
Mail & More	3	3
Toyota Bal.	3	3
S. Mig Coffee	2	4
Pharos	1	5
Bacchus	0	6

2 p.m.—Harbour
Centre vs Mail & More
4 p.m.—Hapee
vs Toyota Balintawak

remain in the running for the incentive. A loss may relegate them to Pool B, the group composed of the bottom teams that will battle for the last three quarterfinal berths.

"We're going for that (Pool A slot)," said coach Allan Gregorio after the Comets rolled to their third straight win behind guards Marty Arellano and Khiel Misa after a 0-3 start.

"Harbour doesn't need the win, we need it more. I hope they relax."

But coach Jorge Gallent believes his Batang Pier have addressed their near-meltdowns when they completely dominated San Mig Coffee, 86-63, last Saturday.

"We played 40 minutes of basketball, not like before when we played for just 30 to 38 minutes," he said. "Every win is still crucial, it can bring us to the semifinals."

The Complete Protectors have also shown more cohesiveness with Norwood, Mark Borboran, Larry Rodriguez and Reed Juntilla combining for a balanced attack recently.

But Noel expects rough sailing from the Road Kings. "They just came from a big win so I won't take them lightly. I know they are also prepared for this game," he said.

The Road Kings outclassed the Coffee Kings, 71-66, last week.

Jasmine W. Payo

Ardina routs Orlando field by 9 strokes



DOTTIE ARDINA debuted in the Laura Diaz FCWT (Future Collegians World Tour) with a flourish, firing rounds of 72 and 71 to win the Eagle Creek Open by a whopping nine strokes over local bet Feng Yuue in Orlando, Florida, Sunday.

Ardina's lopsided triumph came on the heels of ICTSI teammate Mia Piccio's come-from-behind win in the World Woods Open of the Laura Diaz FCWT last month. Piccio closed out with a 70 and turned back Sally Watson of Scotland by one stroke in Brooklands, Florida.

The 13-year-old Ardina, on a golf scholarship from ICTSI at the Pendleton Academy, stamped her class early in the 36-hole tournament, gunning down four birdies in the first round and tying for most pars with 11 at the par-73 Eagle Creek Golf Club.

She began the final round with a five-stroke lead over Jessica Alexander of Riverview, Florida, who also made 11 pars in the first 18 holes. But Alexander fumbled with a 79 in the last round and dropped to joint third with Karen Chung (82-74) at 156.

Sustaining her form, Ardina shot the low round of 71 for a 143 total to seal the win in her first FCWT event.

Feng, who made a 79 in the first round, rallied with a 73 to finish second at 152.



SAN BEDA's Chico Tirona goes for a reverse drive off Francis Allera of Santo Tomas in yesterday's featured match.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Lady Stags seek tie for V-League lead today



SAN SEBASTIAN IS FAVORED TO REGAIN joint leadership when it tackles also-ran Adamson while Ateneo wants to exact revenge on arch rival La Salle today in the 2007 Shakey's V-League women's volleyball second conference at The Arena in San Juan.

The Lady Stags go up against the Lady Falcons at 3 p.m. aiming to match idle University of Santo Tomas Tigresses' 8-1 slate. More importantly, they would be on equal footing with the Tigresses for an automatic finals berth.

The Lady Stags broke the Lady Falcons' two-game winning run with a 25-20, 25-18, 25-14 victory during the elimination round last Oct. 19.

Thai import Jaroensi Buakee, team captain Laurence Ann Latgaya and Rysabelle Devanadera starred in that win, combining for 43 points.

It has been an inconsistent Adamson squad that showed

up from there, its title aspiration ending last Sunday with a second straight semifinal loss.

In the 5 p.m. main game, the Lady Archers are not setting out to get back at the Lady Archers, who dealt them a 25-23, 25-19, 25-20 beating on Nov. 5. They also want to lock the defending champions out of the title race.

The Lady Archers bowed to the Tigresses last Sunday, 25-17, 25-16, 18-25, 19-25, 15-8, and now need to win all their remaining three games to avail of the 3-of-4 incentive. They will meet the Lady Falcons on Nov. 23.

Under league rules, the lower-ranked teams in the semifinals can still secure a playoff for the second finals seat if they win three of their four matches.

The Lady Eagles bounced back from a loss to the Lady Stags Sunday by beating the Lady Falcons, 27-25, 25-15, 25-22, to improve to 6-3.

Romina S. Austria

GAMES TODAY	(The Arena, San Juan)
3 p.m.—Adamson	
5 p.m.—Ateneo vs La Salle	

UST 8-1

SSC 7-1

Ateneo 6-3

Adamson 4-5

La Salle 3-5

UST 8-1

SSC 7-1

Ateneo 6-3

Adamson 4-5

La Salle 3-5

UST 8-1

SSC 7-1

Ateneo 6-3

Adamson 4-5

La Salle 3-5

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Adamson 4-5

La Salle 3-5

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SSC 7-1

Ateneo 6-3

SPORTS

A25

Federer plays idol Sampras across Asia

FEDERER: Reigning king

SEOUL—ROGER FEDERER AND Pete Sampras are without doubt two of the greatest tennis players the world has ever seen, but they only ever faced each other once.

All that will change this week when 12-time Grand Slam winner Federer plays his idol, who has 14 Grand Slams to his name, in three exhibition matches across Asia, starting in Seoul on Tuesday.

The Swiss ace should win hands-down given he is at the peak of his powers, lifting his

fourth Masters Cup title on Sunday, and Sampras retired from the professional game in 2002.

But the American legend has been working hard on getting back in shape and is unbeaten in three starts on the Jim Courier Outback Champions seniors tour, his first serious tennis since hanging up his racket.

Following Seoul, Federer and Sampras move to Kuala Lumpur on Thursday before ending up in Macau on Saturday.

Tickets are selling fast, with fans relishing a rare chance to see two giants of the game on either side of the net.

Lincoln Venancio, managing director of the Hong Kong-based promoter, Entertainment Group Limited, touts the showdowns as "a real once-in-a-life time opportunity."

"Some fans are comparing this classic to the Muhammad Ali vs Joe Frazier boxing match, to Pele and Maradona playing on the

same football pitch or to Van Gogh and Picasso working on the one single painting," he said.

Sampras won five US Open titles and two more at the Australian Open, but it was Wimbledon where he was unbeatable, lifting the trophy seven times.

Along with his Grand Slam success, Sampras held the world No. 1 ranking for a record 286 weeks, including a streak of 102 weeks that has now been bettered by Federer.



SAMPRAS: Former No. 1

Chinese TV nets \$11B for Olympics

BEIJING—CHINA'S STATE-OWNED BROADCASTER CCTV has netted 80 billion yuan (\$10.7 billion) in an auction for advertising next year when Beijing stages the Olympics, press reports said on Monday.

Sunday's auction attracted 30 percent more companies than the previous year partly because firms are keen to cash in on the Olympics, the Beijing News reported, without specifying how many made bids for advertising slots.

"When you take into account that August 2008 is the Olympic month, it turns the whole year into a bumper year for advertising," CCTV advertising chief Xia Hongbo was quoted as saying.

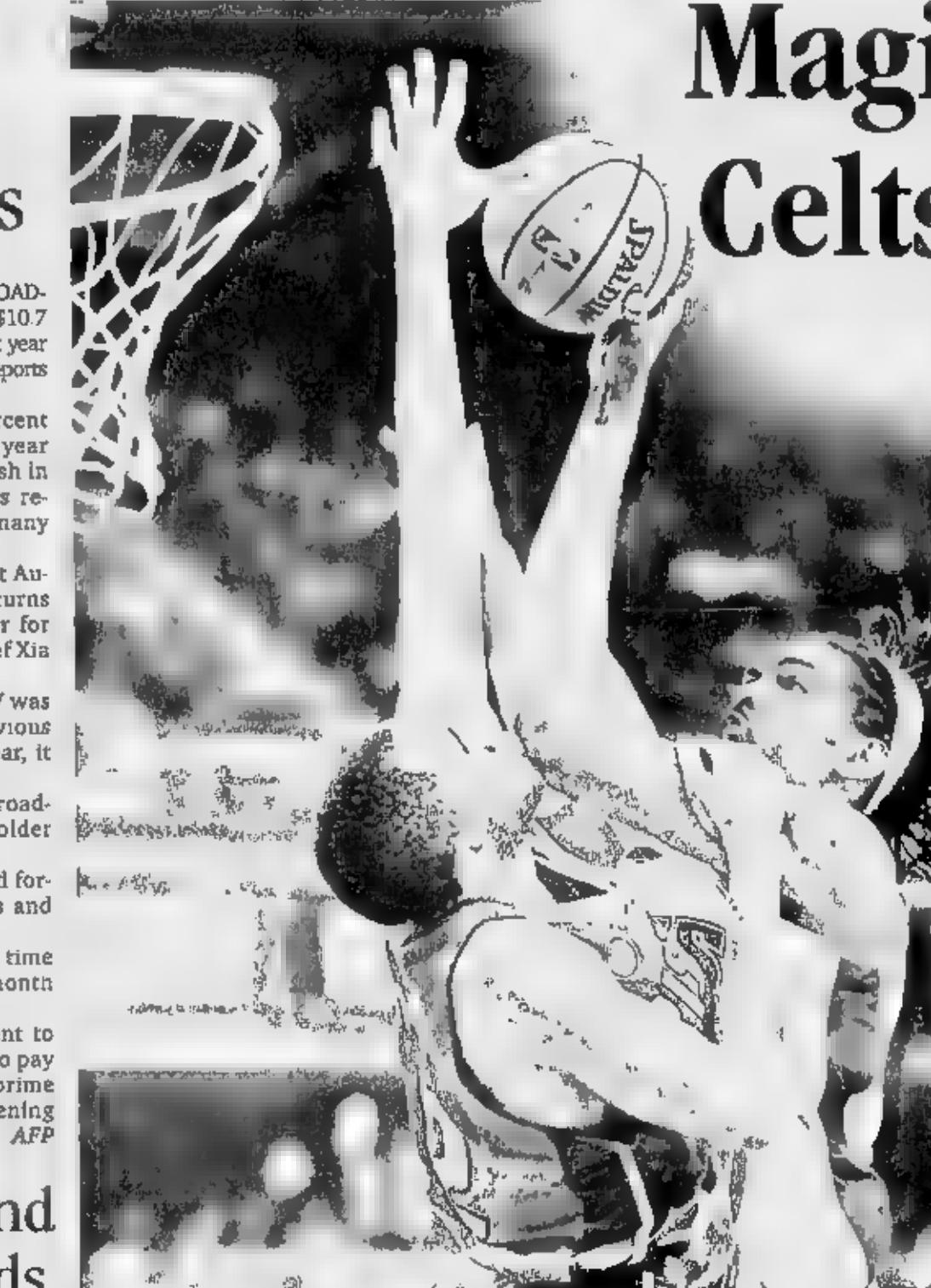
Income of \$10.7 billion for CCTV was up almost 20 percent on the previous auction in 2006 for the current year, it added.

CCTV is China's only national broadcaster and the country's rights holder for the Aug. 8-24 Games.

During the auction, domestic and foreign firms were assigned numbers and invited to make secret bids.

Most sought-after were prime time viewing slots during the Olympic month of August, the paper said.

One of the top August slots went to China Airlines, which was willing to pay out more than \$5 million for a prime time position after the main evening news bulletin.

**Pereira, Nystrand rip swim records**

BERLIN—THIAGO PEREIRA OF BRAZIL and Stefan Nystrand of Sweden broke world records Sunday at the Arena short-course swim World Cup.

Pereira, who won six gold medals at the Pan American Games earlier this year, swam the men's 200-meter medley in 1 minute, 53.14 seconds, beating the time of 1:53.31 set by Ryan Lochte of the United States in 2006.

Nystrand swam the men's 50 freestyle in 20.93—0.05 faster than Roland Schoeman's mark set in 2006—for his second world record and the fourth overall at the Europa-Sportpark pool in two days.

Marleen Veldhuis of the Netherlands won the car awarded to the top performer following a world record in the 50 freestyle Saturday with a European best in the 100 Sunday. She timed 52.14, followed by Britta Steffen of Germany in 52.17.

On Saturday, Veldhuis beat Therese Alshammer and broke the Swede's world record by clocking 23.58 to establish herself as a favorite at the Olympics.

AP

THE KINGS' Mikki Moore (right) wards off Pistons' Tayshaun Prince in their NBA game in Sacramento, Calif., on Sunday. The Kings won 105-95.

Ochoa breaks \$4-M barrier with 8th victory

PALM BEACH, FLORIDA—WORLD number one Lorena Ochoa birdied the last hole to hold off Natalie Gulbis and win the \$1 million top prize at the season-ending LPGA Tour Championship here Sunday.

Mexico's Ochoa stumbled to a double-bogey five at the 17th hole and the four-stroke lead she had enjoyed since the sixth hole shrank to a single shot as Gulbis birdied the 17th.

But Ochoa answered with a birdie on the final hole to finish on four-under par 68, two strokes better than US standout Gulbis to claim the largest prize in women's golf by winning an 18-hole, eight-woman shootout.

"This is a great way to end a great

year," Ochoa said. "One of my goals was to win more titles than (six from) last year and to win a first major. I've done both."

Ochoa, who won the Women's British Open, captured her eighth title of the year and boosted her record prize money total above \$4.4 million.

But her downfall nearly came on the 17th, which she had quadruple bogeyed on Thursday.

"As I look back on 17, my caddie was like, 'OK, we have one more hole, just finish,'" Ochoa said. "And I just won the tournament."

Gulbis was going for the pin at the 18th as she had all day but settled for par on the final hole.



OCHOA: Raking it in

Ochoa, who had already clinched the LPGA season money crown and top player honors, jumped to a four-stroke lead after only six holes.

She buried the second, third, fifth and six to reach four-under par while no rival was below par.

Creamer birdied the 11th and Gulbis the 13th to each stand within four of Ochoa with only five holes to play, setting the stage for Ochoa's stumble and eventual salvation.

Creamer was third on par 72 followed by compatriot Cristie Kerr on 74, South Koreans Mi Hyun Kim on 78 and Sarah Lee on 80, US veteran Christina Kim on 81 and Australian Karrie Webb on 84.

AFP

Orchard Founders Cup tee times moved up

SHOTGUN START TIMES FOR the Orchard Founders Cup slated this Thursday to Sunday have been moved to 6:15 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. for the morning and afternoon sessions due to the shortened daylight hours, organizers announced yesterday.

The four-ball format will be used at the Gary Player course and the aggregate format at the Arnold Palmer to accommodate the 700-plus cast of entries.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos heads the entries in the event that dangles P1.5 million in cash and merchandise prizes throughout Founders Cup week.

according to Orchard president Conrad Benitez.

Grand raffle prizes in this year's tournament—sponsored mainly by Globe Telecom, Security Bank/MasterCard, BMW/Ford Alabang, Bosch Phils./Davies Technical Solutions, Sta. Lucia Realty, Philippine Airlines and Mizuno—are PAL business class tickets for two to the West Coast packaged with a Royal Caribbean Cruise, two BMW cars and other major prizes with a combined value of more than P5 million.

Each participant will have eight chances to shoot a hole-in-one and win a BMW luxury car.

SOFT-SPOKEN AND ALWAYS AFFABLE Angel Nepomuceno, father-coach of bowling great Paeng Nepomuceno, has been in hospital due to a hip fracture he suffered at home a week ago.

"My 79-year-old dad was washing his face when he suddenly lost his balance and fell," recalled four-time Bowling World Cup champion Paeng. "It was sad, a big shock, to the whole family."

Angel was rushed to the Cardinal Santos Hospital, where he stayed at the Intensive Care Unit for some time. But according to Paeng, his dad is now out of the ICU unit although Angel is still unable to stand and move. "Even the slightest movement gives my dad unbearable pain."

Worse, Paeng said, his dad caught pneumonia, slowing down his recovery after he underwent surgery to replace a bone socket in the hip. It will take several weeks of physical therapy and rehabilitation before Angel can resume normal daily activities.

The average healing time for this kind of hip injury is six to eight weeks, according to Dr. H. Winter Griffith, author of the best-selling book "Sports Injuries."

Healing is considered complete when there is no pain or motion at the fracture site and when X-rays show complete bone union. Thus, Angel can begin daily

Get well, Angel**CLEAN LIVING**

Manolo R. Iñigo



these years I've read your column with much interest because it's done with sincerity, honesty and written with plenty of facts. I even read in your column sometime ago the name of our former coach at the Abellana High School in Cebu City, Pio Robillos, an Asian Games player in the late '20s.

"Let me take this opportunity to request that you include in your column a list of basketball Olympians from 1936 up to the time we last played in the Olympics. I'm sure many of your readers would be interested to know them."

"When the Micaa disbanded and the PBA was formed, it started the downgrading of our Filipino players. Team owners gave more emphasis on imports at the expense of our local (homegrown) players. If we don't change our system of developing athletes, attitude and love of country, we won't stand much of a chance against foreign national teams."

So, how about it? I've been following basketball since 1948—the heydays of Laura "The Fox" Mumbar and company. They really played for love of country. I am now 72 but still active in reading and viewing (games on TV).

"Thanks, good health and more power!" (In a future column, I will write about your request.—MRI)

Race 1—(Or/Tn)—Premier Edition (5), Green Lane (6), Aim To Please (1), Rock Hard/Tempest (7)
Race 2—(Pen/Or/Tn)—Valid Hazard/Kingdom (3), Field Star (1), Material Rule (6), Imperial Mandate (2), Anger Red (7)
Race 3—(Or/Tn)—Public Express (1), Terry Toon (4), Model Line (3), Big Blit (2)
Race 4—(Pen/Or/Tn)—Kam-

BY TOP CHOICE
bed (7), American Troop (4), Uncle Buck (3), Mr. Lucas (2), Golden Party (8)
Race 5—(Pen/Or/Tn)—Steam Time (2), Summer Rain (1), Iron Chef/Termidor (9), Coat of Arms (4), Old Reliable (5)

Race 6—(Sup/B/Or/Tn)—Ho Ho Ho (11), Gonzalez Sloopy (10), King Afghan (2), Graceful (6), Blue Print (9), Graceful Conqueror (5)
Race 7—(Pen/Or/Tn)—Dancing Queen (7), Vhingget (1), Reign Of Fire/Lord Of The Ring (4), Fighting Jack/Ideal Of My Soul (8), Golden Party (8), Galent Warrior (1), Grand Resta (5), Maximum Impact (3), Ingay Impact (4), Victory Ranger (1)

SPORTS

GMA Cup: So, two others seek grandmaster titles

By Roy Luarca

YOUNG SENSATION WESLEY SO LEADS THREE Filippines bidding for grandmaster titles when the National Chess Federation of the Philippines stages the President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo Cup International Open and the third Prospero Pichay Jr. Cup international tournament in the next three weeks.

The 14-year-old So, the world's strongest player in his age group with his Elo rating of 2531, needs only one more GM result, just like fellow International Masters Ronald Dableo and Jayson Gonzales, to become the country's eighth grandmaster.

And the absence of two Chinese super GMs and Indonesia's top two players who will vie in the World Cup is expected to boost the Filipinos' chances in the



DABLEO ENKARAZAS WESLEY SO RYAN LIM

GMA Cup, which stakes \$40,000 (about P17.2M) and the \$30,000 Pichay Cup event.

Both the GMA Cup, slated Nov. 22-28 at the Duty

Free Fiesta Mall in Parañaque City, and the Pichay Cup, scheduled Dec. 1-7 at the Bayview Hotel in Manila, will adopt the nine-round Swiss system.

"Pipilitin ko po (I'll try my best)," said So, a high school sophomore at the St. Francis of Assisi-Bacoor who won the 2007 World Under 16 Team Championship Board 1 gold medal with an astonishing 9.5 points out of a perfect 10. "These tournaments provide a golden opportunity for GM aspirants like me."

Dableo is racing to redeem himself after serving a suspension slapped on him by the NCFP while Gonzales is hoping to end his three-year quest and finally join the ranks of Filipino GMs Eugene Torre, Joey Antonio, Mark Paragua, Bong Villamayor, Nelson Mariano and Darwin Laylo.

With Chinese GMs Ni Jua and Li Chao and In-

donesian aces Utut Adianto and Susanto Megaranto absent, reigning titlist Zhang Pengiang, also the winner of the Sixth Asia Chess Championship in Mandau City in September, has been tagged the favorite for the \$6000 GMA Cup champion's purse.

Ni, Li, Adianto, Megaranto and Laylo have qualified for the World Cup set in Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia, starting on Nov. 23.

"We're confident that we can duplicate, if not surpass, the success of previous international tournaments that we have hosted," said NCFP president Prospero Pichay Jr., who is hoping to produce the second GM under his tenure in the twin tournaments being backed by Duty Free Philippines and Pagcor.

Opening ceremonies of the GMA Cup will begin at 3 p.m. on Nov. 22.

Jins eye Olympic berths anew in Asian qualifier

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE TAEKWONDO RESUMES ITS mission to beat a path to the Beijing Olympics, this time via Vietnam.

The country's top three jins will fly to Ho Chi Minh City this Saturday to fight for the right to compete in the Olympics in the Asian qualifying event.

Mary Antoinette Rivero, Alexander Briones and Elaine Alora hope to join Tshomlee Go, who earlier secured an Olympic slot by bagging the bronze medal in the world qualifying held last September in Manchester, England.

Rivero, who missed the cut in Manchester after dropping a sudden-death decision in the quarterfinals, will vie for her second straight Olympic stint in the female 67 kg division.

A veteran of the Athens Olympics, Rivero fell a win short of an outright berth to Beijing. She received the raw end of the deals from the referees who awarded the win to her Croatian opponent in the extra round, where the first to score wins the match.

Briones lost to British bet Aaron Cook in the first round of the 80 kg world qualifying while Alora takes the place of elder sister Eunice in the female 49kg. Eunice also bowed out in the first round in Manchester.

The 17-year-old Elaine is the reigning



SECOND CHANCE: Mary Antoinette Rivero (left) in action during the Athens Olympics.

Southeast Asian Games gold medalist who started in the sport as a 5-year-old.

Go will also be joining the team to familiarize himself with the competitors and act as one of the trainers, according to Philippine Taekwondo Association officials.

PTA president and Philippine Olympic Committee chair Robert Aventajado will lead the delegation along with the PTA executive vice president, grandmaster Hong Sung Chan.

Roberto "Kitoy" Cruz and Rocky Samson are the men's and women's coaches, respectively.

Jalandoni grabs TRS Novice Cup driver slot

JED JALANDONI BESTED OTHER young aspiring racers to emerge the 5th TRS-CI Magazine Top Driver Challenge champion recently at the Subic International Raceway.

Jalandoni, a 19-year-old from Bacolod and a student of College of St. Benilde, stood out among the five finalists as the unanimous choice of the instructor-judges.

For his victory, Jalandoni qualified for a slot in the Ford Focus Novice Cup, scheduled Nov. 23-24 and organized by Tuason Racing School (TRS) in Subic.

Baron Travel-Royal Carib golf today at Southwoods

OVER 200 PLAYERS TEE OFF today in the 5th Baron Travel Royal Caribbean Golf Classic at the Legends course of the Manila Southwoods in Carmona, Cavite.

The tournament field, made up of Baron Travel's top corporate clients, will shoot for top honors plus fabulous vacation packages.

Among those at stake are Royal Caribbean Cruise packages, inclusive of air fare, donated by Philippine Airlines, KLM Royal Dutch

Airline, Korean Air, and Cathay Pacific Airways, among others.

International and domestic plane tickets and packages courtesy of Continental Airlines, Seair, Asian Spirit, El Nido Resorts and Camp John Hay Manor and Camp John Hay Golf Club are also up for grabs in the grand raffle during the awarding ceremonies.

The event is also supported by Fila Golf, Yes! Golf, XXIO/Srixon, and Assistcard International.

NO RAFFLE REQUIRED

INSTANT CHRISTMAS GRATIFICATION

That's enough money to buy you a flat screen TV or a digital SLR, or a trip to Hong Kong for two. Buy your girl a diamond ring or a wristwatch chronometer for yourself. Get your Mom a new kitchen or your brother nice new scooter or... To find out how visit any of your favorite Nissan dealers now. Hurry this offer won't last longer than Christmas!

Offer good up to December 15, 2007 only. Savings applies only to Nissan Sentra GSX & G3. Other financing packages available for X-TRAIL variants. Financing packages subject to bank approval. Per DTI-IVA Permit No. 11-130, Series of 2007.

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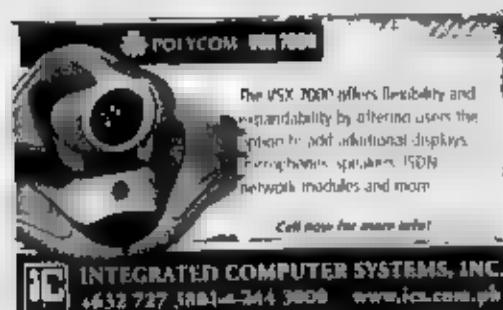
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B2

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T-bill yields decline as gov't reject most bids

Banks fail to push up rates on all maturities



Malacañang replaces Philcomsat nominees

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT yesterday appointed a fresh set of nominees to the controversial Philcomsat group of companies, signaling a potential end to one of the most acrimonious disputes on the local corporate scene.

The new government nominees on the board of the Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. (Philcomsat) are former National Telecommunications Commission chief Abraham Abesamis, businessman Ramon Jacinto and Lakas-CMD Deputy Secretary-General Rodolfo G. Serrano.

Also appointed by Malacañang as directors of the parent firm, Philippine Overseas Telecommunications Corp. (POTC), are retired Justice Santiago Ranada, lawyer Daniel C. Gutierrez and labor leader Allan S. Montano.

They replaced the previous set of government nominees Enrique Locsin, Manuel Andal, Juho Jajandoni and Guy de Leon.

During yesterday's stockholders' meeting, the government was represented by Presidential Management Staff Undersecretary Enrique D. Perez and lawyers of the Department of Justice who were responsible for voting the state's 35-percent stake in the firm.

MALACAÑANG/B2

By Doris C. Dumiao

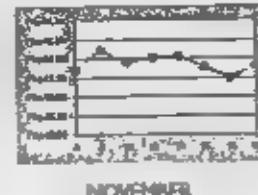
YIELDS ON TREASURY BILLS fell across all maturities yesterday as the government foiled banks' attempt to push up the rates, and rejected most bids during the primary auction.

Rates on the 91-day T-bill rate—the benchmark in pricing loans—declined to an average of 3.672 percent from 3.7 percent registered in the last auction two weeks ago.

The rate on 182-day T-bill tenor averaged lower at 4.692 percent from 4.707 percent, while the 364-day T-bill average rate also slipped to 5.567 percent from 5.628 percent.

T-BILL/B2

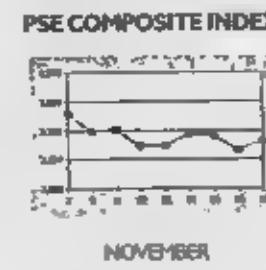
CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE
P 43.19 = \$1
As of 5 p.m., Nov. 19, 2007

NOVEMBER

INDICATORS



PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

NOVEMBER

STOCK MARKET

Shares close 1.3% higher

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY closed 1.3 percent higher, boosted by Wall Street's performance at the end of

last week and indications of a strong domestic economy, dealers said

STOCKS/B2

BSP eases forex climate for OFW households

THE BANCO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas has prepared measures to boost the remittance environment for Filipino workers abroad and cushion the adverse impact of a strong peso on households supported by overseas inflows.

In a recent report to Malacañang, the BSP said that in order to enhance transparency and promote competition in the remittance market, banks would be required to post within their premises and websites their various remittance products and charges with breakdown of costs, delivery time to beneficiaries, and other relevant information.

"The transparency of bank charges would enable Filipinos overseas to shop for cheaper and better service providers," the BSP said. "At the same time, this encourages greater competition among remittance agents and promotes lower remittance fees and charges."

To improve access to financial services, rural banks would be allowed to service foreign exchange remittances as well as buy and sell foreign exchange, facilitating the remittance process. This is expected to improve the delivery of remittance service and provide depositors, including overseas Filipinos, the option to keep their savings in the form of foreign currency.

deposits—if they so wish—instead of immediately exchanging their earnings for pesos.

The BSP has also approved alternative modes of remittance, such as Internet-based remittance, use of mobile phones for performing financial transactions utilizing the SMS/text feature of cell phones for balance inquiry, fund transfer and withdrawals.

Banks have also introduced other new technologies to which beneficiaries will have greater access, such as card products with debit feature to facilitate remittances with financial institutions as issuers, and telephone companies as service providers," the BSP said.

The interconnection of the three major automated teller machine networks—Megalink, Bancnet and Expressnet—also effectively widened the delivery network of overseas remittances and improved the country's payments and settlements system for a faster and safer flow of remittance funds to beneficiaries, the central bank said.

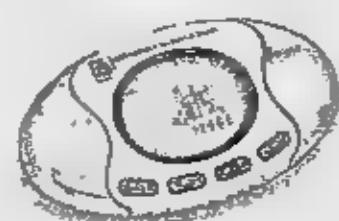
Acceptable IDs for financial transactions were also simplified, in order to attract overseas remittances to the banking channel.

To encourage overseas Filipinos and their families to increase their savings and invest-



Get Started Savings Account comes with FREE life insurance, now even for depositors up to 70 years of age. That's life insurance coverage that Senior Citizens cannot easily get, and it's for FREE. The coverage is equivalent to 5x the account's balance up to P2 million and US\$40,000. It is available in Pesos and Dollars and the Peso insurance coverage you get from your Get Started Peso Savings Account is on top of the Dollar insurance coverage you can get from your Get Started Dollar Savings Account.

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For DTI-MCR Permit No. 3627, Series of 2007. Printed period Oct. 16 to Dec. 30, 2007. See back for details.

*Average Month-to-Date Average Daily Balance (MTD-ADB) of the past three calendar months prior to account's creation.

Incentives expected to lure Taiwan firms to RP

2GO pilots cold chain

By Riza T. Olchondra

2GO, THE LOGISTICS ARM of the Abott Transport System, has partnered with the Department of Agriculture to test its cold chain service.

Cold chain, a temperature-controlled supply chain for perishable goods, completes 2GO's line of services.

2GO is offering this service as a new option for customers sending smaller volumes of cargo that require cold storage.

2GO has offered this service to the DA in support of the government's ongoing World Food Day project.

The DA, in cooperation with barangay officials, set up 24 Barangay Food Terminals in Luzon where produce from the agriculture basket of Mindanao is sold at more affordable prices.

Under the program with 2GO, the consolidated demand requirements from the terminals are sent to suppliers from Davao and Bukidnon and the produce is loaded onto the 2GO cold-refrigerated trucks and distributed via the roll-on, roll-off network.

Through this partnership between 2GO and the DA, farmers are able to send their goods without going through middlemen, thus cutting down on costs.

Discouraged in China, companies are enticed to set up shop in Subic

By Rizel W. Domingo

TAIWAN IS PUSHING for more investment incentives for its companies locating in the Philippines as Taipei and Manila continue their work in establishing the Subic-Kaohsiung economic corridor.

Minister of Economic Affairs Steve Chen said during a visit last week that Taiwanese investors are particularly hopeful for better business climate at the Subic and Clark freeport zones.

"Many Taiwanese firms are increasingly getting discouraged with the deteriorating investment conditions in China and are looking for alternative destinations," Chen told reporters.

He said Subic and Clark are "excellent locations" in

terms of geography and the availability of facilities.

However, he said, Taiwanese investors wanted a more favorable environment, including additional incentives.

"Some examples under discussions are ensuring sufficient supply of power and water, with much more stable prices; ensuring production cost could be maintained at a much lower level, providing market potential for Taiwanese investors, not only in RP but throughout Southeast Asia," Chen said.

Officials from Taipei are cooperating closely with their counterparts in Manila to ensure that the Subic-Kaohsiung corridor will get to provide more incentives to Taiwanese investors, he added.

Chen was in the country to attend an economic conference held last Friday at the InterContinental Hotel in Makati City.

T-bill yields decline as gov't reject ...

From page B1

year, the BSP lowered its benchmark interest rates by 25 basis points during the Monetary Board's monthly policy rate last week. The overnight borrowing rate was slashed to 5 percent and the overnight lending rate to 7.5 percent, their lowest levels in 15 years.

Secondary market rates of government securities fell by an average of 7 basis points last week after the central bank slashed its overnight rates for the second straight month.

Before the auction, Beltran said the committee conducted a survey and the indication was that

the rates should fall. He said there was no negative news that could justify the sudden change in market sentiment.

On news that the Bureau of Internal Revenue might have fallen short of its revenue target in October, Beltran said the government's overall fiscal position for the month "wasn't too bad."

On the other hand, some bankers said the market was demanding for higher yield from T-bills to make these government securities more competitive against the BSP's high-yielding special deposit accounts.

From page B1

board now intends to take control of its subsidiaries, PHC and Telecommunications Center Inc. (TCI),

which are still being managed by Locsin, Andal, Lukun, Brodett and Tan, the statement added.

Malacañang replaces Philcomsat nominees

the Philcomsat group has been involved in controversy "ever since the appointment of the Locsin

group in 2002."

With new government nominees in the Philcomsat companies, the unified

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PSE net income up 174%

Listing-related earnings provided the boost

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

A SHARP GROWTH IN THE Philippine Stock Exchange's listing-related earnings boosted the bourse's nine-month net income to P406.86 million, up 174 percent from P148.37 million a year ago.

In its financial report, the PSE said its operating income grew 120 percent to P796.04 million during the nine-month period, from P361.34 million in the same period last year.

Listing-related income, which accounts for 50 percent of operating income, surged 155 percent to P243.42 million in nine months due to higher fees and increased number of companies that held initial public offerings or additional listings.

The PSE registered seven IPOs and 44 additional listings this year, compared to only two IPOs and 33 additional listings a year ago.

Among those that held their IPOs as of September this year are Pacific Online Systems Corp.,

National Reinsurance Corp. of the Philippines, Phoenix Petroleum Phils., Aboitiz Power Corp., GMA Network Inc. and Anchor Land Holdings. Home builder Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc. underwent a listing by introduction process.

Those that offered additional shares to the public during the nine-month period included Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Union Bank of the Philippines, Alliance Global, Filinvest Land Inc., Philippine National Bank and Vista Land.

The increase in operating income was also attributed to higher membership fees which grew 134 percent from year ago to P113.98 million, or 14.32 percent of the total.

The huge trading volume registered during the period resulted in a 199-percent rise in transaction fees P84.665 million from P28.31 million last year.

The PSE's operating expenses also rose 26.97 percent to P208.49 million from P164.2 million in the same period last year.

Of the total expenses, compensa-

tion and other related staff expenses grew 43.8 percent to P87.64 million from P60.93 million. The PSE has 114 employees as of the period under review.

Professional fees also rose 78.5 percent to P13.28 million from P7.44 million due to the increase in the honorarium of board directors and committee members and the higher consultancy fees paid by the bourse.

Repairs and maintenance costs were higher by 35.48 percent to P6.21 million from P4.59 million.

Travel and transportation expenses were up 193 percent to P4.3 million from P1.47 million in the same period last year, while entertainment and recreation expenses rose 35 percent, mainly for meals incurred during meetings with investors and institutional representatives.

The PSE, however, said it cut down on certain costs such as infrastructure fees, membership development due to lesser golf-related expenses by getting sponsorships and lower insurance premiums.

Metrobank profit hit P5.3B in 9 mos

By Doris C. Dumla

DMCI income increases by 68%

CONSTRUCTION GIANT DMCI HOLDINGS Inc. said its consolidated net income in the first nine months grew 68 percent to P1.735 billion from P1.029 billion in the same period last year.

In a financial report filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), DMCI said the increase was due to improvements in its real estate and construction businesses, which registered a 1,322-percent and 19-percent increase in earnings during the period, respectively.

Real-estate arm DMCI Project Developers Inc. reported P583 million in earnings during the nine-month period, up 1,322 percent from only P41 million in 2006. Overseas Filipino workers accounted for about 30 percent of its total sales.

The company also estimated that 50 percent of local purchases were funded by OFW money. Most of its OFW buyers are those in Italy, London, Vienna, Hong Kong and Dubai, which are not affected considerably by the US dollar weakness, DMCI said.

Bonifacio Heights, DMCI's 7.7-hectare condominium project at Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), made significant contribution to total earnings during the period.

However, DMCI said it recorded a P322-million loss in the third quarter from an income of P185 million in 2006, after the company decided to reverse some extraordinary and nonrecurring items in its water business under DMCI-MPIC Water Co. Inc. (DMWC), the joint venture between DMCI and Metro Pacific Investments Corp.

Elizabeth S. Lacson

lending businesses.

"System improvements in risk management and compliance have also been put into place. We are now in a better position to take advantage of the improving market conditions," he said.

Consolidated assets as of end-September rose by 6.1 percent to P673.84 billion from P634.97 billion a year ago.

The bank expanded its net loan portfolio by 6.3 percent year-on-year to P282.85 billion from P266.01 billion on fresh corporate loans disbursed to companies in the power, oil, telecommunications, shipping and manufacturing sectors.

Total deposits went up by P23.97 billion to P503.22 billion while equity expanded by P9.42 billion to P68.73 billion.

In the meantime, the consolidated nonperforming loan-to-total loans ratio of the bank eased to 6.9 percent as of end-September from 9.8 percent a year ago following the bulk sale and write-off of bad loan accounts during the period.

Metrobank has a local network of 540 branches and 35 international branches and offices in 21 countries.

Landbank nets P3.53B

STATE-OWNED LAND BANK OF the Philippines yesterday reported a 31-percent growth in its net profit to P3.53 billion in the first nine months of the year from P2.7 billion a year ago.

Landbank president Gilda Pico said total revenue from loans, investments and other fee-based businesses during the period hit P18.4 billion.

Pico added that the bank was ahead of its January to September net income target of P2.9 billion. She said she was confident that the year-end target of

P4 billion would be met.

"We are aggressively pursuing our commercial banking operations alongside our social mandate of financing major development initiatives in the countryside," Pico explained.

Landbank ranks among the country's top five banks with total assets expanding 17 percent to P371 billion from P317.5 billion at end-September 2006.

Capital also improved by 17 percent to P34.7 billion from last year's P29.6 billion. Doris C. Dumla

iRemit earnings hit P82M in 9 mos

MONEY TRANSFER FIRM iREMIT INC. registered a 184-percent increase in net earnings to P82 million from January to September this year from P28.9 million in the same period last year.

In its financial report filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), the company said its operating revenue increased 46.7 percent to P353.5 million in the first nine months, from P240.9 million last year due to growth in transactions handled.

The company said transaction count or the total number of remittance transactions handled by iRemit subsidiaries, affiliates and tie-ups in foreign countries rose 37.4 percent to 1.34 million in 2007, from 978,497 in 2006. Also contributing to the rise in revenue is the 35-percent increase in US dollar remittance volume to \$537.2 million in 2007, from \$396.8 million last year.

Of the total transaction count this year, the contributions per region are as follows: Asia Pacific (42.5 percent), Middle East (23 percent), North America (15 percent) and Europe (11.5 percent).

In terms of dollar remittance value, Asia Pacific accounted for 33.4 percent while Europe came in second at 18.5 percent.

Total operating expenses including depreciation and amortization was higher by 22.9 percent to P172.18 million, from P140.05 million in 2006.

Elizabeth S. Lacson

CURRENCIES

November 19, 2007

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Euro Equivalent

Dollar Equivalent

Peso Equivalent

November 19, 2007

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PNOC-EDC seen retaining government guarantees

Gov't raising fees to 2% per year up to 2010

By Abigail L. Ho

AHEAD OF THE COMPLETION OF PNOC Energy Development Corp.'s privatization by the end of this month, the Department of Finance has agreed to keep existing national government guarantees on the company's debts subject to certain conditions.

In a letter to PNOC-EDC president and chief executive Paul Aquino, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the government guarantees would "continue to have force and effect even after the complete divestment of (Philippine National Oil Co.'s) interest in PNOC-EDC."

There would be an increase, however, in the guarantee fee to be paid by PNOC-EDC to the national government from one percent per year to 2 percent, starting January 2008 to December 2010, Teves said.

This fee would be increased by 0.25 percent a year every year starting January

2011, he said. However, a cap of 5 percent was set.

The government's Privatization Council would have to agree to this arrangement.

In the same letter, Teves said the signing of a guarantee fee agreement between the DOR, in behalf of the Republic of the Philippines, and PNOC-EDC—which shall include, among others, a provision that PNOC-EDC will have the option to continue with the guarantee or to refinance the guaranteed loans—was also a condition.

The government is selling its remaining 60-percent stake in the company. Five groups have been prequalified to bid for this stake.

These are ACR-AEI Holdings Inc., FDC Geo-Energy Holdings Inc., AP Renewables, Red Vulcan Holdings Corp. and Panasia Energy Holdings Inc.

ACR-AEI Holdings is a joint venture be-

tween Alsons Consolidated Resources and AEI Investments Inc.

FDC Geo-Energy is a partnership between Fihinvest Development Corp. and International Power Masinloc Holdings Inc.

Red Vulcan is a consortium composed of First Gen Corp., Spalmare Holdings BV and Prime Terracotta Holdings Corp.

Panasia Energy is a partnership between San Miguel Energy Corp. and Beleggingsmaatchappij Broem BV, while AP Renewables is an Aboitiz Power Corp. company.

The five bidders have until 9 a.m. of Nov. 21 to submit their bids for the controlling stake in PNOC-EDC.

The notice of award would be issued to the winning bidder by Nov. 22. The full payment of the bid will have to be remitted to the government by Nov. 30, the scheduled closing date of the transaction.

PEOPLE

stroll

by an electronic board with stock update outside a securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. The Nikkei 225 average fell 112.05 points, or 0.74 percent, to close at 15,042.56 points in the Tokyo Stock Exchange. It was the Nikkei's lowest close since July 2006.

Palay output expected to post record growth

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE COUNTRY'S PALAY PRODUCTION could grow by a record 10 percent in the fourth quarter, according to the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice).

"It is possible and probable," said Gimntuang Masaganang Ani (GMA) rice program director Francisco Malabanan, concurrently PhilRice chief science research specialist, on Monday.

With total harvests hitting 9.8 million metric tons as of end-September, Malabanan said the production of another 6.4 million metric tons was possible.

Agriculture, which accounts for about a fifth of domestic economic output, saw all its sectors grow in the first nine months of the year

despite a prolonged dry spell that affected the main island of Luzon.

According to Department of Agriculture data, palay output has increased by 3.5 percent at end-September while overall farm output rose 4.3 percent.

In the fourth quarter of last year, palay output reached 5.78 million metric tons.

If palay grows by 10 percent as Malabanan projected, the volume of production in the fourth quarter would reach 6.36 million metric tons.

This would enable the government to meet its whole-year target of 16.2 million metric tons.

Malabanan explained that the fourth quarter traditionally contributes the bulk of the yield per year.

Geograce Phils taps management firm

MINING COMPANY GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc. (Geograce) said it had signed a management services agreement with Geograce Management (Hong Kong) or GMHK for the provision of specialized management and technical services to the Philippine unit and its affiliates.

GMHK is headed by former Environment Secretary Michael Defensor (chair), who also served as chief of staff of President Macapagal-Arroyo, and Johan Raadsma (CEO).

Raadsma is a former director of banking and head of technical services unit of N. M. Rothschild

& Sons (Australia) Limited based in Sydney. He was also regional manager for Philippine Gold Ltd., where he oversaw the 2Moz Masbate Gold Projects.

Raadsma, an Australian national, has more than 30 years of experience in mining, civil construction and resource development. He has directed and participated in startup projects worth US\$15 million to \$700 million.

He holds a bachelor degree in mining from the University of New South Wales and has significant work experience in the United States, Australia, the Philippines, Indonesia and West Africa.

DOF backs bill seeking tax cut on insurance

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE has agreed to endorse the bill seeking to cut the premium tax on life insurance policies from 5 percent to 2 percent.

Insurers believe such a measure will give the industry a big boost.

A Finance official said the endorsement was already made known to the Senate committee on ways and means, which is in the process of hearing the bill authored by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada.

The official, however, said the DOF made it clear to the committee that the premium tax cut should be implemented only after the government was able to balance its budget position, which was expected to happen next year.

According to DOF estimates, the bill, if approved, will result in foregone revenue of P1.2 billion a year for the government. The DOF's endorsement is expected to be welcomed by the

Philippine Life Insurance Association Inc. (PLIA), which has been pushing for tax relief for the industry. Its earlier proposal, however, was to entirely lift the 5-percent premium tax, which is computed based on the gross amount of yearly premiums.

Also, PLIA proposed the scrapping of the documentary stamp tax on insurance products.

It noted that the Philippines was the only country in Southeast Asia that charges a premium tax.

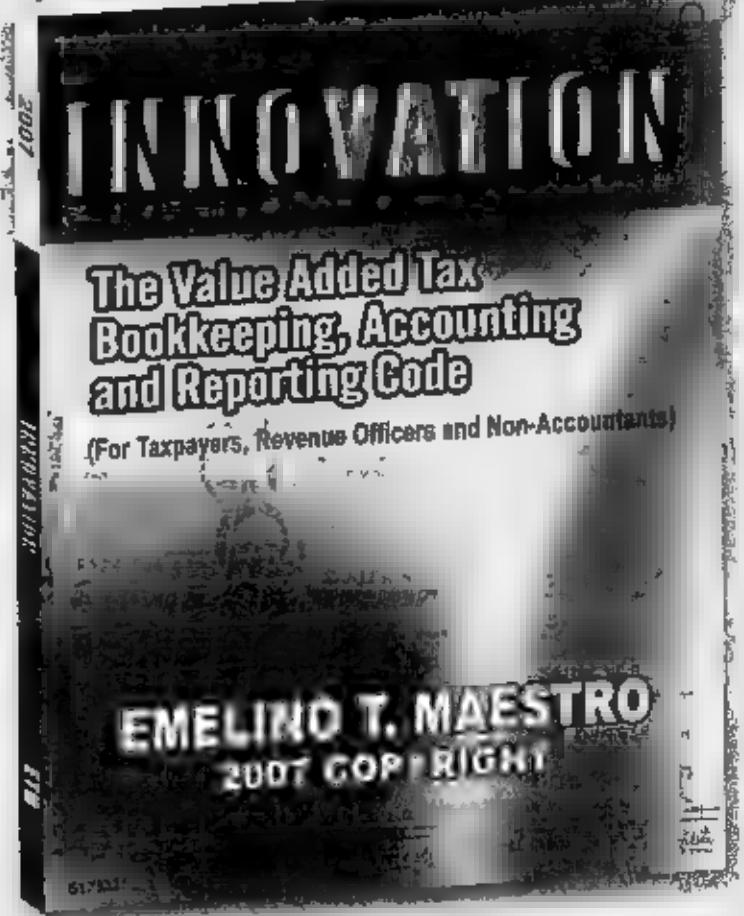
The current tax treatment puts Philippine life insurers at a disadvantage as their products become more expensive. In an industry critical to the long-term capital mobilization and formation needed to sustain economic growth, providing the needed tax relief will benefit the country over the long term," PLIA had said in a position paper submitted previously to the DOF.

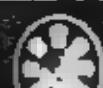
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February 28, 2008
March 28, 2008
April 3, 2008
May 7, 2008
June 18, 2008
July 17, 2008

Subic
February 21, 2008

Cagayan de Oro
April 17, 2008

May 14, 2008

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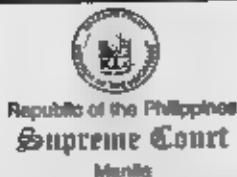
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TUESDAY,
NOVEMBER 20, 2007

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

CLASSIFIEDS



INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bids and Awards Committee for Goods and Services (BAC-GS) of the Supreme Court of the Philippines ("the Court") invites interested bidders qualified under Republic Act No. 9184 (The Government Procurement Reform Act) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

Project	Supreme Court Healthcare Services Project
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	P27,343,917.00
Pre-bid Conference	November 27, 2007, Tuesday, 2:00 p.m. at the OCA Conference Room 2, 3rd Floor, Old Building Supreme Court, Taft Avenue, Manila.
Submission and Opening of Bids	The eligibility requirements of prospective bidders must be personally submitted by the duly authorized representative, and the bids will be opened, thereafter, in the presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives, to be held on December 4, 2007, Tuesday, 2:00 p.m. at the OCA Conference Room 2, 3rd Floor, Old Building, Supreme Court, Taft Avenue, Manila.
Deadline for submission of eligibility requirements with Technical and Financial Proposal Envelope	December 4, 2007, Tuesday, 1:30 p.m. at the OCA Conference Room 2, 3rd Floor, Old Building, Supreme Court, Taft Avenue, Manila.
Source of Funding	General Appropriations Act-2007
Contract Duration	One Calendar Year

- All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security, in the form and amount prescribed in the instruction to Bidders. Late bids shall not be accepted.
- Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in R.A. 9184 and its IRR. Only bids from bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. Bids in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage to finally determine responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
- A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased, if cash, by interested bidders from the Office of the BAC-GS Secretariat starting November 20, 2007 up to December 25, 2007 at the address indicated below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00), prior to the conduct of pre-bid conference, the bidding documents shall be received personally by the prospective bidder or its authorized representative. The Committee will only accept bids from bidders who have purchased the bidding documents from the office indicated below.
- Prospective bidders must not be related to the head of the procuring entity or any member of the BAC-GS or its Secretariat either by consanguinity or affinity up to the third civil degree.
- The BAC-GS reserves the right to: (a) reject any or all bids; (b) waive any defect or formality in the bid requirements; (c) accept such bids as are deemed advantageous to the Court; (d) declare a failure of bidding; and (e) make no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

November 15, 2007

Office of the Secretariat

BAC-GS

Office of Assistant Court Administrator NIMFA C. Vilches
Supreme Court of the Philippines
Taft Avenue cor. Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila 1000

Contact Person: Ms. Evangeline D. Reyes

Tel. No. 523-1301

(Sgt.) NIMFA C. VILCHES
Assistant Court Administrator &
Chairperson, BAC-GS

(PDN - Nov. 20, 2007)

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Frontel Corporation, a fast-growing outbound call center firm located in Makati City, seeks to recruit high caliber and vibrant professionals for the positions of Outbound Tele-Salesperson to be based in Makati City.

Outbound Tele-Sales

Successful candidates will be part of a team responsible for handling and servicing partners as well as institutional clients. The post will require competitive sales people to sell our top online eBusiness platforms and convert leads into deal thru phone.

The requirements

- 3-5 years relevant experience including experience from banking, insurance, mortgages, etc. etc.
- Excellent work ethics and with high sense for responsibility
- You must come from the outbound phone sales background.
- Strong sales orientation
- Eurocent and self-starter
- Persistent, systematic with a strong change orientation
- Fluency in English. Knowledge of German, Russian, French or Arabic will be considered an advantage

Remuneration

An attractive remuneration package including performance related pay will be offered to the successful candidates according to qualifications and experience.

Basic Pay:

Ph P 30,000 +++ /Month

Bonus:

Ph P 5,000 /Sale

Interviewed applicants should e-mail their CV (Microsoft Word) to the Head of the Human Resource Services Department (quoting the reference number 192/HRSU7) at: hr@frontel.net

Deadline of submission is on 23 November 2007, 12:00 PM (Midnight Time).

Frontel Corporation
Unit 708 Tower 1, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Philippines
Telephone Number +631 473 4953

For inquiries, look for Mr. Melvin Valentin



REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
KAGAWANAN NG KATURANGAN
PANGASIWAAN SA PATALAUN NG LUPAIN
LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY
East Avenue cor. MIA Road, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Delivery of Desktop Computers and Notebook (PC) Computers

The Land Registration Authority (LRA), through E.O. 2006 (General Appropriations Act (GAA) R.A. 9401) issued to apply the delivery of 80 units Desktop Computers and 30 units Notebook (PC) Computers for the Contract (ABC) for the delivery of 80 units Desktop Computers and 30 units Notebook (PC) Computers respectively to payments under the contract for the delivery of the above stated equipment to the Land Registration Authority (LRA) located at LRA Building, East Avenue corner MIA road, Quezon City. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

The Land Registration Authority now invites eligible bidders for the delivery of:

① Desktop Computers with the following specifications:

• Processor: Intel Core 2 Duo (2.66 GHz, 2MB Cache and 800MHz FSB)

• 80 GB Hard Disk Drive

• DVD ROM Drive

• Monitor

• Keyboard

• Mouse

• XP Operating System

• 15" LCD Monitor

• Anti-virus software installed

• Other parts as per parts and service

Delivery of 80 Desktop Computers and 30 Notebook (PC) Computers for the delivery of:

• Processor: Intel Core 2 Duo (2.66 GHz, 2MB Cache and 800MHz FSB)

• 80 GB Hard Disk Drive

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BUSINESS

Individual income tax take hit P102.1B in Sept.

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE collected P102.13 billion in income tax from individuals in the first nine months of the year, up 5 percent from the P97.29 billion collected in the same period last year.

The BIR attributed the higher tax

take partly to the improvement in the economy.

The Department of Finance, mother agency of the BIR, earlier said the better-than-expected performance of the economy should naturally lead to higher aggregate income and therefore an increase in tax collection.

The latest individual income tax

collection, however, fell short of the government's target of P109.37 billion by P7.2 billion.

Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran earlier said tax collection was increasing, but not in step with the growth of the economy, because the BIR still needed to improve efficiency in tax collection.

Of the individual income tax collected as of September, only P5.2 billion was contributed by professionals and other self-employed individuals.

This was P5 billion short of the target of P10.2 billion and even P4.2 billion lower than the P9.39 billion collected in the same period last year.

On the other hand, fixed-income earners, or those employed by companies, contributed P86.26 billion in income tax to the government in January to September.

This was short of the P86.97-billion goal, but higher than the P77.05 billion collected in the same period last year.

Income tax collected from individuals who sold real properties amounted to P2.56 billion, short of the P3.8-billion goal and lower than the P3.59 billion collected in the same period last year.

Income tax withheld by clients from self-employed individuals serving as suppliers reached P8.1 billion, slightly short of the P8.2-billion goal but higher than the P7.26 billion collected in the same period last year.

The BIR has been urged to intensify efforts to improve auditing, especially of income taxes.

Last year, according to DOF estimates, the government lost close to P107 billion in potential revenues due to income tax leaks.

Export earnings from niche coco products up

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EXPORT EARNINGS FROM NICHE COCONUT-BASED PRODUCTS REACHED SOME \$3.66 MILLION (ABOUT P160 MILLION) IN JULY THIS YEAR, ACCORDING TO THE UNITED COCONUT ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Upac data showed that nine nontraditional coconut exports earned at least \$100,000 or P4.4 million each last July.

The top earner was glycerin, an ingredient in home-made and commercial beauty products.

Glycerin exporters earned \$1.18 million from shipments totaling 1,805 metric tons in July.

Top buy was Japan, which took half of the total, followed by the United States, South Korea and New Zealand.

Nata de coco came second with \$487,558 from sale of 684 MT, up by 4.6 percent in volume.

Traditional biggest buyer Japan took in 58 percent of the cargo while significant volumes went to Malaysia, Vietnam, Hong Kong and South Korea.

Third was virgin coconut oil with \$400,485 from delivery of 151 MT, almost thrice the volume shipped out in the same month last year.

Canada overtook the United States as main destination while the rest of the shipments went to United Arab Emirates and five other countries.

Liquid coconut milk was fourth with \$399,046 in earnings from 329 MT, which was more than triple the volume sent out in July last year.

The United States was the top buyer

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2 months	3.50%	3.63%	3.75%	3.88%
3 months	3.63%	3.75%	3.75%	3.88%
6 months	3.75%	3.88%	3.88%	4.00%
12 months	3.88%	4.00%	4.13%	4.25%

Rates are subject to change without prior notice, on per annum basis and subject to 7.5% withholding tax.

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IN THIS ISSUE
**Avoid the extra pounds
 this Christmas /D1**

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

SMS feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

INSIDE OUT
 Cory Quirino

Staying sane and sexy

IN THIS CRAZY world, the pace of living has become hectic. As a result, not only life, but also our sanity, spins out of our reach.

Managing madness

Believe it or not, this world is not what it appears to be. At first glance, life may seem to be static, stationery. But a closer look at subatomic space reveals a new reality—atoms seem to move randomly but there is order in this randomness.

Awareness of this truth can be liberating. If we follow this thinking, it is OK to be a little crazy. Question is, how far will you allow madness to rule your life?

If you feel that craziness has overtaken you, it is time to take control.

Welcome change

The daily grind of living can rob you of spontaneity. So try something different today. You could reinvent yourself, remodel your surroundings or simply change the color of your hair or your outlook.

Remember, life is about perception. If you see dark, dreary colors, then that is how you will paint your life. And that is exactly what you will attract.

Be comfortable with silence. Surrounding yourself with music/sounds, noise and the chat-

ter of people may at first be appealing and fun. But nothing compares to the eloquence of silence.

Close your eyes. Be still. Shut out the noise. Breathe slowly, deliberately. Journey towards the waters of calm. There is a lake of placid stillness inside every heart. Find it and connect with the source of calm—God.

Grant yourself permission to be happy. A major stumbling block in achieving your goal is reluctance on your part.

Start now. Say to yourself, "Life's blessings are mine because I deserve them. Not yesterday, not tomorrow but today."

Change your inner clock by living your life "now." Do not be anxious about tomorrow or regret the past. Let today be a glorious celebration.

Start by thanking the sun for rising, the stars for shining, the birds for chirping in St. Francis of Assisi style.

Take ownership. Instead of saying "I will be happy, healthy, wealthy" or whatever you wish, declare instead "I am happiness, health, wealth." Assume your aspirations are reality in you.

Watching the waistline

Sure, it is the longing to fit into your favorite 10-year-old pair of jeans. But it is not impossible. To turn it into a possibility:

1. Eat everything you want but in small amounts. Studies show that restricting your calorie intake to five to eight small meals a day will lead to weight management and eventually weight loss.

Also, do not eat close to bedtime. The additional calories will not be burned by your body.

2. Bulk up by adding more fiber to your meals. Increase vegetables/fruits intake. Or add fiber food supplements to your juice like coco opsyum.

3. Practice the law of balance.

Declare no-sugar days. This allows you to have your sweets in a regulated regimen. Example: If you feel you overdid desserts today, then tomorrow take no sweets.

4. Raise your glass to toast life, but it should be a healthy beverage. If you begin your day with freshly made vegetable/fruit juice, your energy levels are boosted beyond measure. This is also a sure way to lose weight.

5. Burn whatever calories you can so keep moving. Remember it is better to run,

dance, jog, climb/walk, stand rather than just sit and lie around.

6. Time management is vital. Reserve at least 30 minutes to one hour a day for any form of physical activity—even if it is just house cleaning, moving furniture, gardening, walking the dog or walking up the office building's stairwell. Any activity is better than none.

7. Choose a favorite wall at home or office to do your push-ups and a chair to do your arm pushups.

Reward yourself

You are special, therefore consider yourself a very important person. Lift yourself up and let no one oppress, depress, repress you. You are not a victim but a victor.

So, today, reward yourself by doing something special for yourself. Buy yourself a gift, sing a favorite tune or simply soak in a bath with milk and rose petals, salt and coconut oil, beer and honey, orange peel.

Life is cause for celebration so stay sane and sexy.

Love and light!

WHEN HAIRLOSS GETS SERIOUS



When your hairloss progresses to more than just a few hairs now and again, take it seriously. Call Svenson urgently for a no-cost hair and scalp analysis. Find out why you're losing hair and what can be done.

There are many causes—from poor diet, stress, smoking (or stopping smoking)—to hormonal imbalance, vitamin deficiency, styling chemicals and hair dyes. Most are treatable—you can look forward to much healthier, much thicker hair.

Thinning hair not only makes you look older, it can make you feel self-conscious, depressed and insecure. Take it seriously, call the hairloss experts now.

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LIFESTYLE

Dancing beauty queens

MINNIE CAGATAO JENTES AND Aurora Pijuan were beauty queens when title holders were not just beautiful but articulate and intelligent as well.

Pijuan, a dusky mestiza, was Miss International 1971 while Jentes, an Asian beauty with porcelain skin, represented the Philippines in the 1970 Miss World competition.

Jentes and Pijuan are both overachievers with many different interests.

Pijuan is a mother, grandmother, marketing person, financial whiz, Gawad Kalinga supporter and advocate, erstwhile politician, among other things.

Jentes, a restaurateur and entrepreneur, owns the Schwarzwald Restaurant and is also an online associate travel agent of GT-Trends. The mother of two is also a cancer survivor.

The two women have one more thing in common. They try to lead healthy and ac-

tive lifestyles, eating sensibly and exercising regularly.

Jentes plays golf and dances at Bykes Café at least once a week. She says she would rather dance than go to the gym, which is boring.

Pijuan tries to go dancing at Bykes every week though she does not really think of ballroom dancing as exercise.

While it keeps her weight down, Pijuan dances because she finds it so much fun.

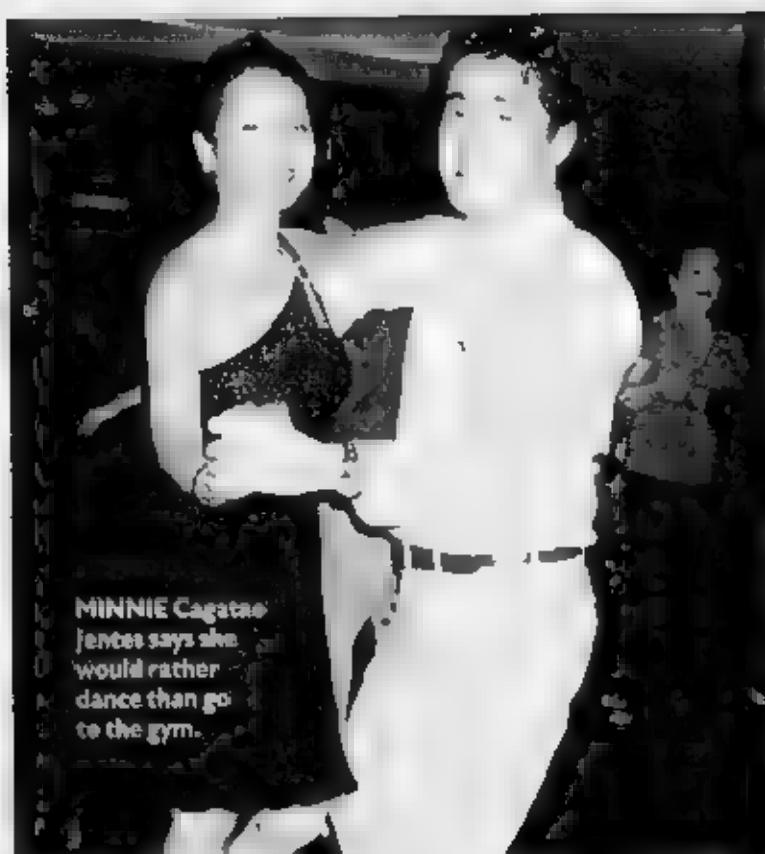
What she likes about Bykes Café is that the dance instructors are tall so she does not look weird dancing with someone shorter. Pijuan says Bykes has good live bands and really excellent service.

Jentes likens going to Bykes to attending a social event. She meets friends, there is a band and the place is nicely appointed. She notes that the interiors were done by Budji Layug.

Bykes Café Dance Studio is at the La Fuerza Bldg., Chino Roces Ave. cor. Sabio St., Makati. Call 7500622, 7500623 or 0916-3862303.



AURORA
Pijuan dances
because it is so
much fun, not
really to
exercise.



MINNIE Cagatao
Jentes says she
would rather
dance than go
to the gym.

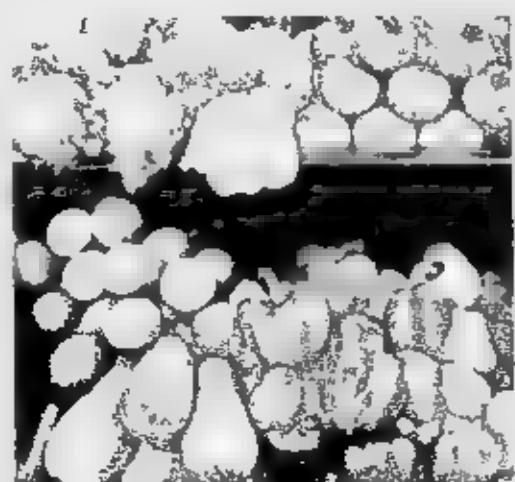
Living the organic life

ANTEL SPA RESIDENCES (ASR) IN Makati makes healthy living the core of modern condo dwelling with its conveniently integrated organic market and restaurant.

Located on ASR's ground floor, the organic market features a vast selection of garden-fresh and pesticide-free harvests.

The upscale gourmet restaurant turns the raw ingredients into healthful and tasty recipe for overall wellness.

Apart from the organic market and restaurant, guests and future tenants can also enjoy the tower's wellness amenities and services including the Wellness Academy features personalized health and exercise programs and the latest fitness trends (calisthenics, Pilates, yoga, kickboxing and fusion of fitness exercises); a variety of body and beauty treatments (a fully equipped fitness gym, upscale beauty and medical clinics, alternative healing and detoxification, his/hers sauna and massage rooms); and unique recreation facilities (a nature trail, 25-meter spa pool and kiddie spa pools with jet stream and imported bamboo canopies, and a junior Olympic-



SAVOR the freshness of pesticide-free
harvests at Antel Spa Residences organic
market.

sized pool).

At ASR, residents do not have to go out to avail of services and amenities to pursue their own health and wellness programs. The Antel Venue Lounge is at 5342 Gen. Luna St. cor. Makati Ave., Makati. Call 8968888 or visit www.antel.com.ph.

Reuse to save the environment

HEALTHY OPTIONS, THE RETAIL chain of stores offering all-natural products, supports the campaign to protect the environment with its "It bag"—the reusable shopping tote bag.

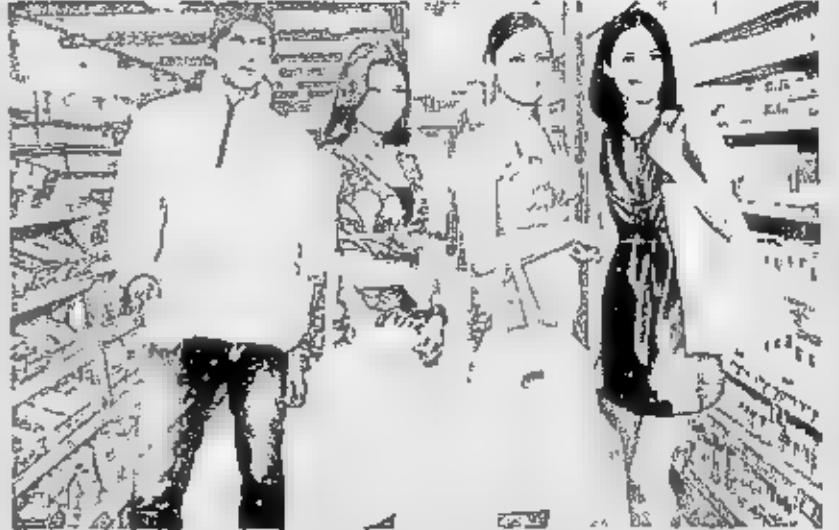
It asks customers to "choose to reuse" as part of its campaign "Saving the Planet without Costing the Earth."

Customers are encouraged to get the all-cotton, durable, bleach-free canvas tote for only P50.

Healthy Options, led by Romy Sia, managing director, is promoting the use of reusable bags to reduce dependence on plastic bags that can take up to 500 years to degrade.

In the United States alone, 100 billion plastic bags are used annually, the energy equivalent of 12 million barrels of oil.

Each high-quality reusable bag will eliminate hundreds to thousands of plastic bags over its lifetime.



MODELS Mikee Carrion, Bubbles Paraiso, Isabel Roces and Grace Tagle shops with the "Choose to Reuse" bags in Healthy Options Trinoma.

Customers who "choose to reuse" will find that the Healthy Options reusable bag can conveniently carry a wide assortment of items, from personal-care products to supplements.

Get the Healthy Options "choose to reuse" shopping bag and help save the planet.

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DR. MARION Isip-Enriquez and Dr. Nancy Reyes-Grey

Design your own smile

A SMILE MEANS MORE than just a cheerful disposition. It signifies optimism and confidence.

So the Makati-based Winning Smiles Dental Clinic that opened in 2004 is committed to bringing out winning smiles in its patients.

The clinic's dental team that includes founder Dr. Marion Isip-Enriquez and Doctors Nancy Reyes-Grey and Gregorio Doronila, provides a wide range of dental treatments and services while ensuring a highly personalized level of care.

At the Winning Smiles Dental Clinic, the rule is "your smile, your style." The dentists offer patients the unique opportunity of doing their smile design. Patients can decide on how their smiles will look for the rest of their lives.

The experts can change the contours of the teeth, even change their color to make them look the way the patient wants.

The clinic makes available dental veneers to improve the

look of the teeth. Dental veneers are custom-made shells placed on the front surface of the teeth to improve their appearance.

The veneers can change the teeth's color, size, shape or length. They are also recommended for treating discolored teeth, tooth gaps, chipped or broken teeth, and misaligned teeth.

For a whiter smile, the clinic also provides bleaching. The Power Bleach uses high-intensity blue light that makes the teeth up to 10 shades lighter with just one dental visit.

The Tray System whitens the teeth gradually throughout the course of the treatment and can be done at home.

The clinic's Hollywood Smile treatment package is a combination treatment of bleaching and veneers.

The Winning Smiles Dental Clinic is at Suite 10, L/GF, Cityland III, VA. Rufino St., Legazpi Village, Makati. Call 8928189 or visit winning-smiles.rxpino.com.



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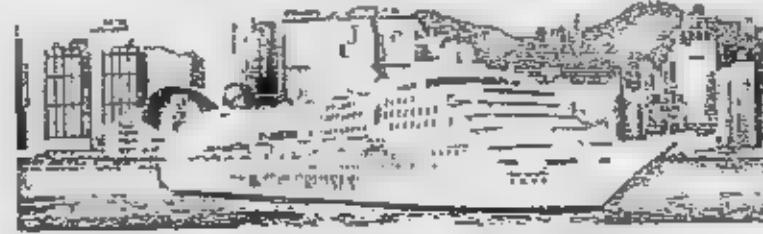
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Mystics and quantum...

From page C4

picture. It is identical with the whole and therefore cannot be contained in it as part of it." (Schrödinger, physicist)

4. "All phenomena and their development are simply manifestations of mind, causes and effects, from great universes to the fire dust only seen in the sunlight, come into apparent existence only by means of the discriminating mind. Even open space is not nothingness." (Suringama Sutra, mystic)

5. "Pure logical thinking cannot yield us any knowledge of the empirical world; all knowledge of reality starts from experience and ends there. Propositions arrived at by purely logical means are completely empty of reality." (Einstein, physicist)

6. "As far as the laws of mathematics refer to reality, they are not certain, and as far as they are certain, they do not refer to reality." (Einstein, physicist)

7. "Vaccha asked the Buddha: Do you hold that the soul of the saint exists after death?"

"Do you hold that the soul of the saint does not exist after death?"

"I do not hold that the soul of the saint does not exist after death."

"Where is the saint reborn?"

"To say that he is not reborn would not fit the case." (Majjhima—Nikaya)

Sutra, mystic)

8. "If we ask, for instance, whether the position of the electron remains the same, we must say no; if we ask whether the electron's position changes with time, we must say 'no'; if we ask whether the electron is at rest, we must say 'no'; if we ask whether it is in motion we must say 'no'." (J.R. Oppenheimer, physicist)

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What is the management of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease?

Management of COPD would be divided into two parts: Reduction of risk factors and Medical intervention. Smoking cessation is the single most effective and cost effective way of reducing the risk and progression of the disease process. Reduction of exposure to all the other environmental risk factors is also important in reducing the risk and progression of the disease. COPD is treated depending on the severity of the disease. Major pharmacologic players in the treatment of COPD would be your bronchodilators usually in the form inhalers or nebulizing solutions and your glucocorticosteroids also usually in the inhaled form, but intravenous and oral preparations are also used depending on the severity and presentation of the disease. Pulmonary rehabilitation has been proven to be an effective non pharmacologic tool in the treatment of COPD. It improves exercise capacity, reduces perception of breathlessness, improves quality of life, reduces number of hospitalizations and length of hospital stay and reduces depression and anxiety.

This week's answer to our feature question was provided by our accredited Pulmonologist, Dr. Elizal Alberto Nolida Jr. Dr. Nolida, a medicine graduate of the University of Sto. Tomas, finished his residency training for Internal Medicine and his subspecialty for Pulmonology in St. Luke's Medical Center where he later became a member of the training committee of the department of Medicine of the said institution. He is a fellow of both Philippine College of Physicians and the Philippine College of Chest Physicians. He is also the current president of the St. Luke's Medical Center Institute of Medicine Alumni Association. MEDICard members may avail for his consultations at St. Luke's Medical Center from Monday to Friday from 8:00 AM to 12 noon or at our newly accredited hospital, Marikina Valley Medical Center every Monday, Wednesday and Friday 3-5pm.

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Take Charge Doc!



Nicky

Your Doctor Knows Best

Aileen S. David-Wang, MD, MSc, FPCP, FPCCP

Question:

I just found out I have COPD after smoking cigarettes for many years. My friends say it is incurable. I get breathless when I exercise or climb stairs—it is frustrating. Is there really no hope for me?

Doctor Says...

Although Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or COPD often presents with progressive worsening of lung function over time, there is much that can be done to alleviate the consequent breathlessness and other manifestations of the disorder. The extent of irreversibility of lung damage (which translates to the level of "incurability") largely depends on the duration and severity of exposure to injurious agents, particularly to cigarette smoke, and a genetic predisposition to its development. COPD is now treatable and manageable. The objectives of treatment include slowing this accelerated decline in lung function, relieving symptoms, reducing the risk of attacks, and improving the patient's quality of life.

Depending on your symptoms and the degree and reversibility of airflow limitation (as assessed by a lung function test called spirometry), your doctor will assess the disease severity and determine what treatment you need. He/she will assess the environmental or occupational agents that you may have to avoid. Smoking cessation is the single most effective and cheapest intervention that you can do to halt or slow down the progression of COPD and save your life. Your doctor will likely prescribe inhaler(s) which work by relaxing the tight airways. These include rapid-acting inhaled bronchodilators which can provide quick relief of the breathing difficulty and long-acting ones that you may need to take

everyday to achieve the longer-term beneficial effects. Patients with more severe disease may also require additional oral bronchodilators and an inhaled corticosteroid which act on airway inflammation. Fixed-dosed combination inhalers which deliver a long-acting bronchodilator and a steroid with a single puff are now also available and have been found to significantly reduce breathlessness on exertion and improve the quality of life of patients. Enrollment in a pulmonary rehabilitation program also gives these benefits. Short courses of oral steroids, antibiotics and nebulized bronchodilators may be prescribed during acute attacks. Your doctor will also likely recommend vaccinations to help protect you against pneumococcal pneumonia and influenza. He/she will also determine if you already need supplemental oxygen and other interventions and if you have other illnesses, such as coronary artery disease, that contribute to the breathlessness. He/she will also pay attention to your nutritional status, since malnutrition is seen frequently among patients with COPD.

There is always hope for COPD patients. Discuss your options with your doctor.

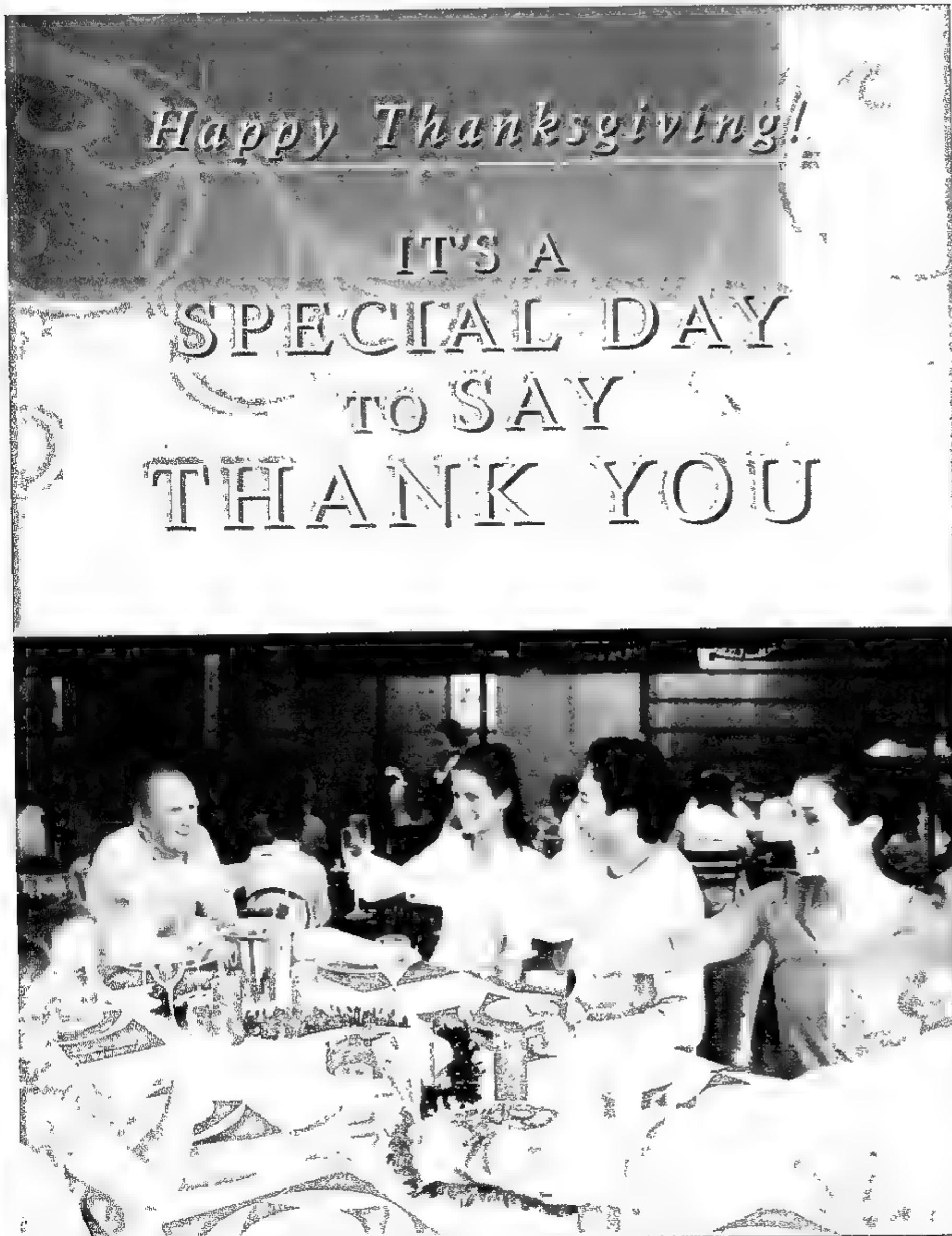
Dr. David-Wang is a Pulmonary Medicine consultant at Manila Doctors Hospital. She is currently the chief of the Section of Pulmonary Medicine at the Philippine General Hospital and Clinical associate professor at the University of the Philippines College of Medicine. She is a member of the Specialty Board of the Philippine College of Chest Physicians.

The column is supported by AstraZeneca Philippines as part of its disease awareness campaign. This is not intended to replace the advice of a healthcare professional. Always consult your doctor.

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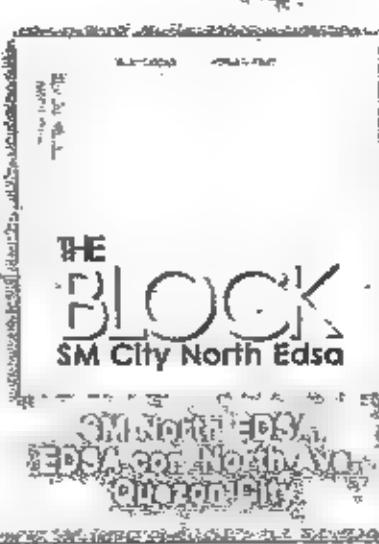
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Mystics and quantum physicists speak the same language



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INNER AWARENESS
Jaime Licauco

QUANTUM PHYSICISTS have discovered to their amazement that, in the sub-atomic world, particles behave in very "unscientific and unpredictable" ways.

For example:

1. An observer watching a particle affects the way it behaves. It can appear as a particle (with a mass, static and at a specific location in space) or as a wave (nonlocal and dynamic)
2. A particle can affect the action or behavior of another at a distance.
3. A particle can revolve in an orbit at one time then suddenly disappear and appear in another.
4. Cause may occur at the same time as, not before, an effect.
5. The exact location of a particle cannot be pinpointed, only the probability.
6. A fourth dimension known as space-time exists.
7. Everything is constantly in a state of motion, never static. Therefore, everything is really energy.

In his best-selling book "The Dancing Wu Li Masters," Gary Zukav says, "The new physics, quantum mechanics, tells us clearly that it is not possible to observe reality without changing it."

Two ways of seeing

Psychologist Dr. Lawrence LeShan says there are two ways of looking at the world. The first he calls sensory reality, the way most of us see it; the other is clairvoyant reality, how mystics and visionaries see the world. These are not opposite but complementary ways.

The Mexican Yaqui Indian mystic Don Juan Manus, who called himself a *brujo* or sorcerer in the books by anthropologist Carlos Castaneda, called the two ways of looking at the world tonal and náagá.

Tonal is the way ordinary people see the world, while Náagá is the way sorcerers or mystics see it, i.e. from an inner or esoteric perspective.

It is difficult for mystics to describe the world they see to ordinary people who see it only from the macro-level, the tonal.

The world the mystic sees is indescribable or difficult to verbalize. The world of particle physics that quantum physicists see is indescribable from the Newtonian standpoint. Nor can it be understood rationally and scientifically.

The same is true with clairvoyant vision. It defies all known laws of physical vision.

Quantum physics has definitely and clearly shown that there is no such thing as objective reality. Buddhists and other Eastern mystics have been telling us for thousands of years the same thing, that everything is *maya* or illusion.

New allies

Psychics and the world of paranormal phenomena have at last found an ally in modern or quantum physicists. They seem to be talking the same language when describing the world. There cannot be any contradiction because truth is one and, if both are telling the truth, both should be correct.

The following statements were made either by a physicist (scientist) or by a mystic (philosopher). They were quoted side by side by psychologist Dr. Lawrence LeShan in his book "The Medium, The Mystic and the Physicist" to show that their language, when describing the ultimate or fundamental nature of physical reality or the universe, was almost indistinguishable from each other:

1. "No doubt we should not speak of seeing, but instead of seen and seen, speak boldly of a simple unity. For in this seeing we neither distinguish nor are there, too." (Plotinus, ancient Greek philosopher)

2. "When we thought we were studying the external world, our data were still our observations. The world was an inference from them." (Dingle, physicist)

3. "...The reason why our sentiment, peripatetic and thinking ego is met nowhere in the world picture can easily be indicated in seven words: because it is itself that world

MYSTICS/C3

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LIFE STYLE



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

COKE HERALDS THE COMING OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas is the most anticipated and celebrated occasion in every Filipino home. As early as when the "ber" months come around, indications of the coming Christmas season begin to surround us, drowning us all in an atmosphere of immense delight and gladness.

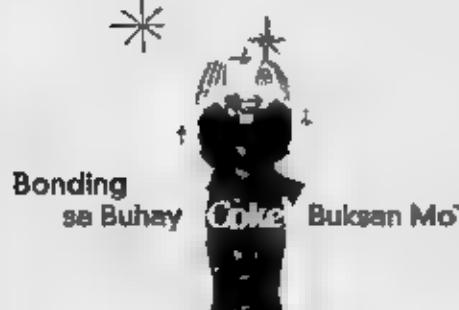
It is not surprising that Moms always make Christmas mealtimes special for the family — she adorns her home with beautiful Christmas décor, brings out her best silverware, painstakingly cooks the family's favorite dishes, and makes sure her family experiences the specialness of the occasion. Indeed, the gathering together during special occasions of every family member—from sons and daughters, to parents and grandparents, down to whole sets of cousins, aunts, uncles and even family friends—is what distinguishes Filipinos from the other peoples of the world.

Naturally, no Filipino Christmas table is truly complete without a bottle of ice-cold Coca-Cola Litro. For decades, Coke has been making every Filipino meal more special as it enhances the taste of our Christmas food, adds laughter to the conversations, and allows family members to catch up with each other. And to make Christmas even more exciting for every family, starting October 21, Coca-Cola will be rewarding, through its Coca-Cola Kasalo sa Pasko Promo, those moms who make Coke Litro part of their meals.

Consumers just need to buy Coke Litro and look under the cap to see if it's one of the winning Kasalo Caps. They have to present ONE (1) Winning Kasalo Cap plus FOUR (4) Red Litro Caps, to redeem their special Kasalo Spoon and Fork collectibles at participating sari-sari stores and public markets nationwide.

With sets of Kasalo Spoons and Forks, Coke Litro, and all your special Christmas meals, you're sure to have a splendid dining table that sings and dances in a medley of tastes, smells and colors!

Now you top everything off with the love and laughter that comes from your family and the thought that Coke will be bringing you even more surprises this season and what you'll have indeed is the merriest Christmas celebration in the whole world.



Stay in shape this holiday season

By Mitch Felipe
Contributor

DID YOU NOTICE YOU MAKE the same new year's resolution every year?

"This happens only once a year. I will just go to the gym and lose 10 pounds starting January. Well, everyone is gaining weight, so there's nothing to worry about."

By procrastinating, you are delaying your success. This becomes a pattern. Your old thinking that makes you eat more

and moveless leads to unhealthy consequences like weight gain and reduced exercise performance.

According to a 2000 study of the United States National Institutes of Health, an average person gains just over one pound during the holidays. Thus, if you do not make the effort to break the pattern, you can gain 10 pounds in 10 years.

Modify behavior

My graduate school thesis, "The Effectiveness of the Com-

bination of Behavior Therapy, Exercise and Diet in Weight Loss," presents behavior therapy as a weight loss intervention. It includes goal-setting, self-monitoring, environmental control, physical activity and eating behavior education, cognitive restructuring, problem-solving, social support and relapse prevention.

The group with weekly behavior modification lessons completed the recommended exercises and followed a nutri-

STAY/D4

Buy Coke Litro* and get a Kasalo Collectible

FOUR RED LITRO CAPS

ONE WINNING KASALO CAP UNDER THE CAP

FREE KASALO COLLECTIBLE

Bonding sa Buhay Coke Bulsan Mo

Claim at Coca-Cola redemption centers
Customer Care Hotline
Metro Manila: 813-2653 (COKE)
Provincial: 1800-1888-2653 (COKE)

How to claim:

- To get the Kasalo Collectible set, you must collect four (4) red promo caps of participating Coke, Sprite or RTO 1-Liter packs and one (1) winning Kasalo Cap (under the cap) of Coke, Sprite or RTO 1-Liter
- Redeem Kasalo Collectible sets at participating Sari-Sari Stores & Market Stall redemption centers
- Redemption period is until February 21, 2008 only. Kasalo Collectible sets are not redeemable for cash.
- A verification process will be conducted upon submission to determine authenticity

BY JESS ABRERA

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

Art: ARNELA AVETRIA



BY LYRA GARCELLANO

ATOMO AND WEBOY



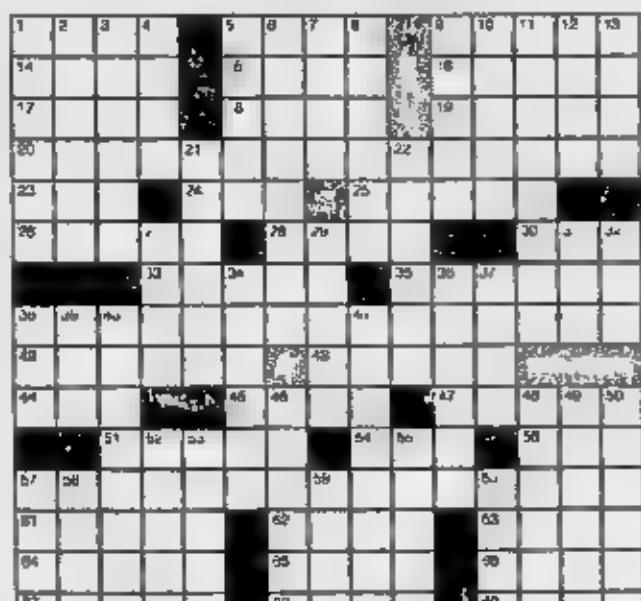
KIKO MACHINE



BY MANIX ABRERA

DAILY CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- Green stone
 - Bananas
 - Beethoven dedicates
 - God of love
 - Sitting atop
 - Kidney-related
 - "Cheers" cheer
 - Portable music device
 - U.S.-Mex.-Can. union
 - New Deal target
 - Flight from the law
 - Ely or Howard Swallowed
 - Yale or Root
 - Cartoon deputy
 - Now seen everything!
 - Alaba
 - Chinese philosopher
 - Bling-bling, e.g.
 - "Hard Times" writer
 - Lets fly
 - Edible tuber
 - Surveyor's map
 - Golf course coarse area
 - Raw-fish dish
 - Tango team
 - New Deal prog.
 - Initial reaction
 - Gem State
 - Thunderclap
 - Pinto River tribe
 - Smoothing device
 - Actor Omer "Whip It" band
 - French river
 - New Age musician John
 - Arabian port
- DOWN**
- Harsh, metallic sound
 - Without principles
 - Scale notes
 - Ms. Bombick
 - "Aurora" fresco painter Reni

By Allan E. Parrish
Mentor, OH

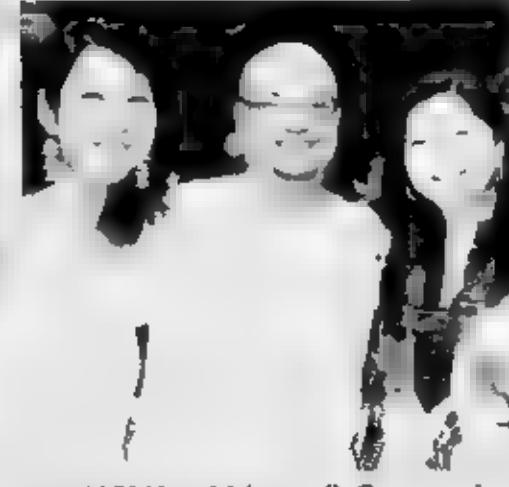
LIFESTYLE



GOV. DV Savellano, Pinky Tobiana, Vincent Aldanese and wife Rhoda Campos A., and Rico Tantoco



FRANCES Lim with lawyer Ily Crespo and Geraldine Ocer



RAFFY and Kat Florencio of Technomarine with Anna and Chito Sobrepara

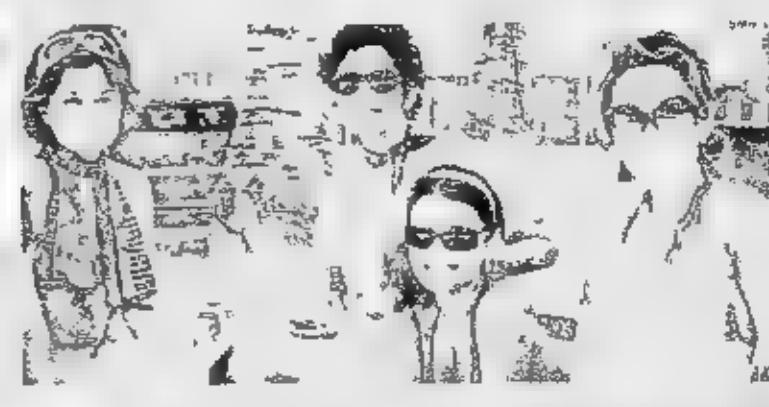


EVANGELINE and Jerry Lacson of Samsung; co-publisher Jerry Tiu and his wife Lianne Tiu; and brilliant publisher of Mega Publishing Sari Yap



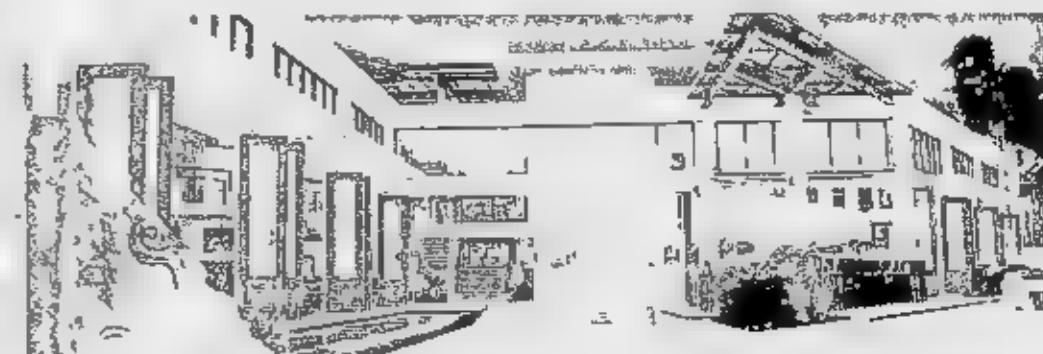
NENA Tantoco and Silk Cocoon's Jeannie

JOJI Dingcong and Ferdie Ong of Minotti

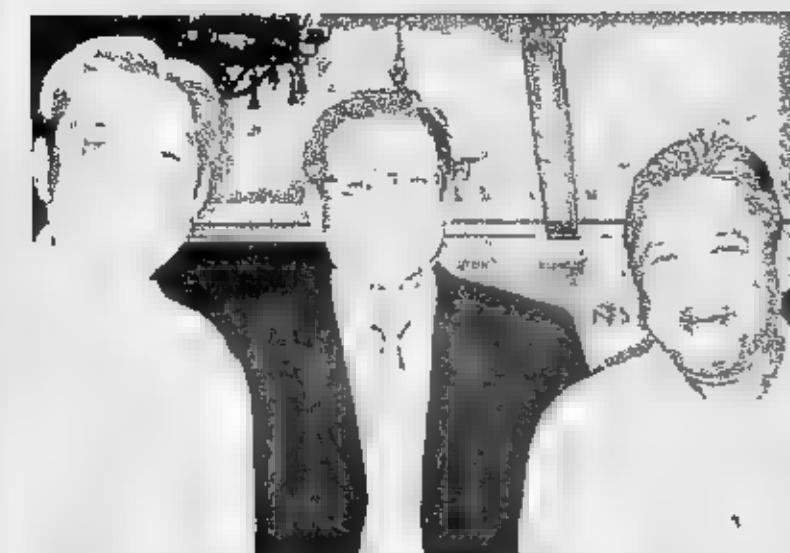


LEXI Berenguer-Testa, Lorraine and Helena Belmonte, and Carla Sibal

MOVIE Shores



Fun weekend affair in Bora



HOTSHOTS. PAL board member Antonio Alindogan Jr., Eton Properties Philippines president and COO Danilo Ignacio, and PAL president and COO Jaime Bautista



TO MARK ITS 20TH YEAR, Lifestyle Asia Magazine brought invitees to its huge bash at the ultra posh Discovery Shores resort in Boracay.

With its pristine white beach, the resort provided the perfect setting for a super relaxed and a totally fun weekend affair, *palanggas*.

Lifestyle Asia's mega divas—Sari Yap, Lorraine Belmonte and Carla Sibal—saw to it that we would all experience the best that Bora could offer.

Only 60 chosen ones were flown to the luxurious destination to be wined, dined and treated to endless rejuvenating beach-front pleasures.

Tech giant Samsung brought its own brand of luxe to the occasion.

An entire day devoted to soothing massages and tropical fruit shakes was the perfect prelude to a night of barefoot partying.

Lifestyle Asia's hot, hot team was joined by Mega Publishing group chair, business magnate Jerry Tiu, and his so nice wife Lianne, no less; Rustans Commercial Corp. president Rico Tantoco and wife, southern lady Nena Vargas; and our town's in-demand fabulous corporate image specialist Joji Dingcong, dahlings.

LA's maiden issue and 20 cakes were distributed among the different tables. Invitees, fabulously dressed in black, socialized while sipping their cocktails then headed to the beach front for an evening of decadent food and entertainment.

Dropping by the next day for lunch was House Speaker Joe de Venecia to congratulate the magazine on its 20th birthday, dahlings.

Once again, Lifestyle Asia put its stamp on an unforgettable weekend getaway, giving everyone a chance to recharge their batteries and proving that "less is more," *palanggas*.

A promo like no other

It was one of those evenings when four or five happenings were going on at the same time. So, what else is new?

One of my first stops was the horsey set's favorite stable, the Manila Polo Club, *palanggas*. Eton Properties Philippines Inc., one of the country's fastest-growing real estate developers, together with partners Philippine Airlines' Mabuhay Miles, hosted a promo unlike any other.

With every purchase of a unit at Eton Emerald Lofts, customers earn miles from Mabuhay Miles that they can use to travel for free to any PAL destination.

The polo club was packed with Mabuhay Miles members and hotshot namedropable executives of PAL and Eton Properties, *natch*.

The event was hosted by PAL's AVP for products Babsie Aragon and entertainer Arnel Ignacio.

Eton president and COO Danilo E. Ignacio said: "This reward is one example of how our clients benefit from the strength of Eton Properties and the LT Group of Companies. It's our way of saying thank you. With Eton Emerald Lofts, it's all about giving more value to future residents and investors."

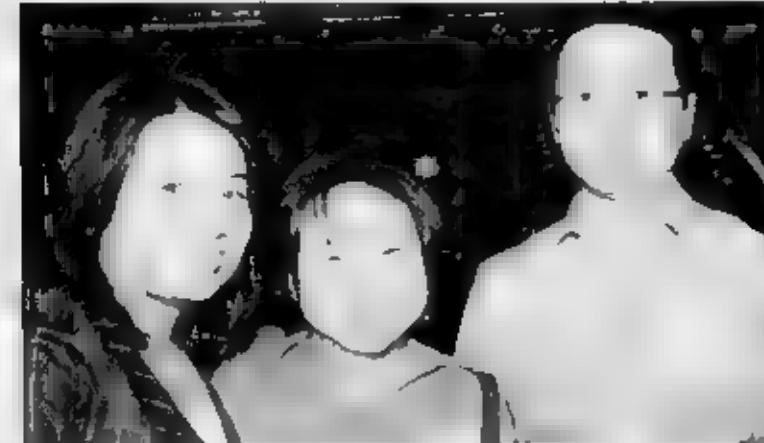
Philippine Airlines hot president and gen-

eral manager Carol and Fredrick Sy

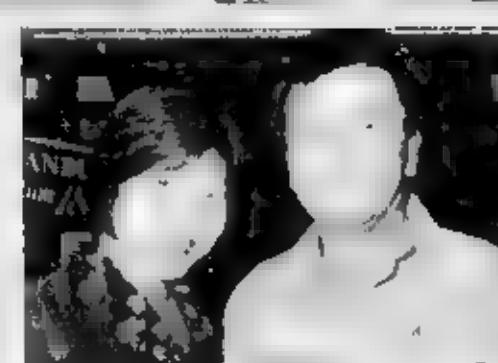


PAL'S brilliant Henry So Uy

PAL'S Babsie Aragon and Mary Ann Timbol



PAL'S Debbie Cuyugkeng, Mabuhay Miles members Rotina and Wilbert Lim



members Carol and Fredrick Sy

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache
Photos by Alex Van Hagen using Kodak EasyShare system



system

Sportswear for the fashionable

SPORTS EMBODY THE elements of freedom, creativity and passion.

Sports aficionados expect the same thing from the clothes they wear. Sassa Activewear are made with those three elements in mind.

The sportswear line offers flexibility to allow maximum movement. Whether the wearer is paddling in the roughest of ocean waters or doing the most advanced of workouts, Sassa Activewear allows her the freedom to move in maximum comfort.



MANUFACTURING uses cutting edge technology.

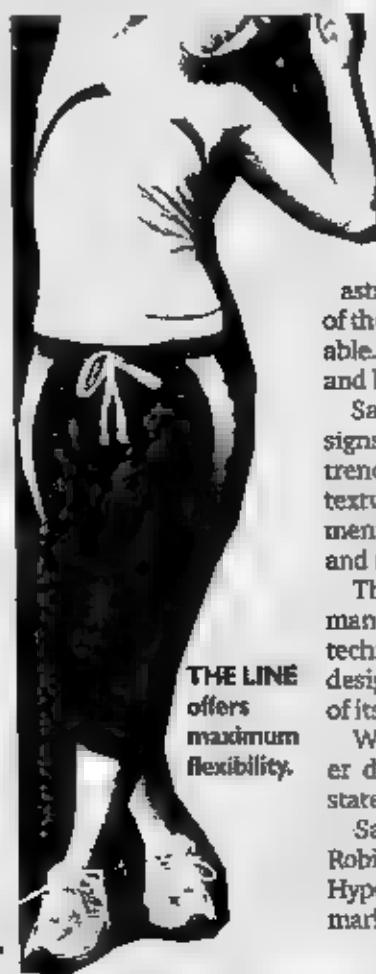
Many sports enthusiasts not only want to be at the top of their game but also to be fashionable. They will not settle ill-fitting and boring sports threads.

Sassa Activewear has sleek designs that go with the latest fashion trends. The wide range of colors, textures and styles make the garments flexible enough to be mixed and matched for street wear.

The Sassa Activewear line is manufactured using cutting edge technology, from the meticulous designing process to the precision of its assemblage.

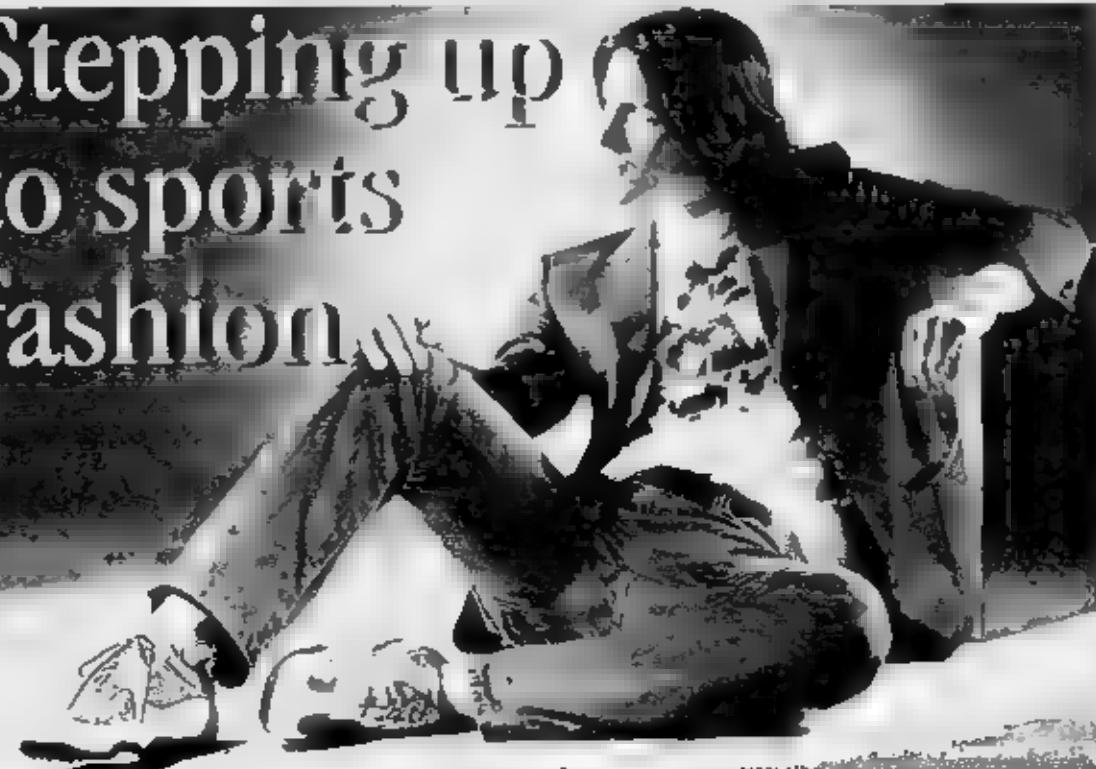
With Sassa Activewear, the wearer does not only make a fashion statement, but a passionate one.

Sassa Activewear is available in all Robinsons department stores, all SM Hypermart branches and the Landmark.



THE LINE offers maximum flexibility.

Stepping up to sports fashion



THE RICARDO SHOE, wing tip front with five eyelets balmoral lacing

FLORSHEIM HAS stepped up its game by expanding its market to include the younger, ath-leisure crowd with its F Sports line.

Leading the line are three shoe styles that are casual enough for leisure time, but built to last any athletic activity.

The Baricelo wing toe slip-on shoe in walnut stone and black colors with a center gore, a fully-cushioned footbed, leather linings and a flexible rubber bottom.

The Ricardo shoe is in two-color genuine soft upper leather, with moisture-absorbing full leather lining, soft padded collar and flexible polyurethane outsole for shock absorbing cushion and



CARRERA bicycle has leather lining that increases the comfort level and cushions the foot.

durability.

The Stroll athletics-inspired slip-on leisure shoe features tumbled leather with perforated nubuck upper, with full-length ortholite® footbed, elastic speed lacing, leather linings and sock lining, and a dual density polyurethane and rubber bottom.

With Florsheim's new F Sports line, walking proudly and stylishly has never been so much easier.

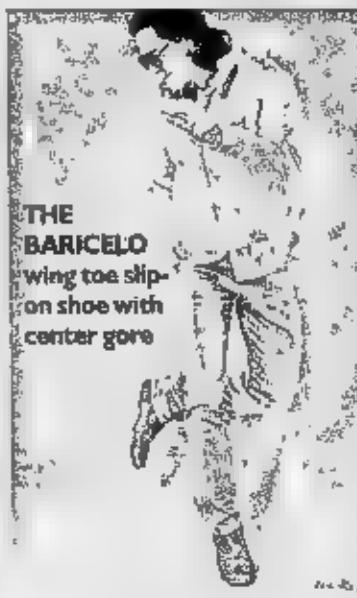
Florsheim stores are located at Shangri-La Plaza mall, Gateway Mall, Araneta Center, Robinsons Galleria, TriNoma, Power Plant Mall Rockwell Center, Glorietta 4 Ayala Center Makati, Robinsons Place Manila, SM Mall of Asia, Alabang Town Center, Festival Mall, SM City Davao, SM City Cagayan de Oro, Ayala Center Cebu.



THE STROLL has contemporary styling.



HARLEY has breathable leather lining.



THE BARICELO wing toe slip-on shoe with center gore.

Stay in shape...

From page D1

tion plan. Members lost an average of 10.2 pounds in eight weeks.

The other group, without weekly behavior modification lessons, lost only an average of 2.6 pounds.

I believe every person can manage his/her own health even during a high-risk situation. You just need preparation and a renewed mind.

Try to practice the following weekly programs derived from effective psychological principles from today until the end of the year to stay in shape and achieve a renewed concept in approaching the holidays.

Weekly programs

Week 1: Set goals and prepare early.

Write down your goals as early as now, what you want to achieve in relation to your health, fitness level, weight and eating habits during and after the holidays.

Be realistic. The goal is to at least maintain weight during the holidays. If you lose, that is a bonus. In reality, we all want to enjoy gatherings and parties and food deprivation will just make you crave for more.

Plan your exercise schedule by considering dates of anticipated parties. Try your best to document food intake and activities.

Week 2: Ask for support and reinforce positive behaviors.

Find an exercise buddy and work out together. You may even reward who exercises the most during the six-week period with a smaller size exercise apparel.

You can train with your friends for sports like marathons or triathlons for the next year. This means at least three to six months of training.

If you start now, you will definitely remain active even during the holidays to be able to perform well for anticipated events.

Week 3: Avoid exposure to temptations.

During this period, you are most likely to shop for gifts and might order boxes of Christmas pastries as giveaways or gifts.

Stimulus control techniques include keeping food out of

sight, out of mind. Buy gifts that will remind you and your loved ones of health and fitness so that you will stick to your goals and keep you away from temptations.

These include fitness books, exercise clothing, pedometer, heart rate monitors, gym bag, socks and gym memberships.

Week 4: Continue lifestyle activities.

Consider every movement as an exercise so you do not feel guilty if you miss planned exercise sessions. Whether you go to the gym or shop the whole day, remember that you burn calories.

Aim for 10,000 steps a day and incorporate two to three times a week of squats, pushups and crunches as resistance training.

Week 5: Practice healthy eating behavior.

Eat delicious but healthy this year. Practice eating on time and having something before the main meal like a piece of bread or fruit and drinking more water at least two to three hours before your meal to prevent binging.

Try a little of everything for satisfaction. Enjoy every bite and try to eat slowly while being mindful about the total amount of intake.

Week 6: Prepare for lapses.

Even if you did well from Weeks 1 to 5, lapses or slips are hard to prevent especially during noche buena or media noche. These are unplanned, unexpected situations that might cause you to revert to unhealthy behaviors and generate unrealistic thinking because you feel you "break the rules."

Prepare an alternative solution if lapses occur. For example, if you eat more than two slices of cake instead of one, make up for the extra 200-300 calories by adding a 300-calorie workout during the week or simply by learning from that experience and trying not to do the same by identifying possible causes like not eating on time or forgetting to be more assertive in family gatherings.

Share your "stay in shape this holiday season" experience!

E-mail the author at mitchfe- lip@gmail.com

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Kodak	Free 5 4R Kodak Digital Prints for every 25 4R Kodak Digital Prints ordered in any participating Kodak Express stores. Free one Kodak Picture Kiosk print for every 10 4R Kodak Picture Kiosk prints in any participating Kodak Express stores. PHP 50 OFF for every purchase of Kodak Ultra Compact Flash OR Water & Sports Single Use Camera in any participating Kodak Express stores. 10% discount on cash purchase of Kodak Easyshare V series, Z series and M series (available in Silicon Valley/ Camerahaus)
The Mabuhay Manor Hotel	20% Discount on Hotel Accommodations on cash or credit card (based on published rates) 20% Discount on Food & Beverage products at Sutukil and Lola's Restaurant. 10% Discount on Banquet Packages 20% Discount on use of Swimming Pool

OFFERS

Goldilocks	Free 1 pc. Sandwich Bread 400 g. for a minimum single receipt worth P350.00
Chowking	"Special Holiday Sale Set" for 4 persons for Western Union Gold card holders (total savings of P300.00)
Star City	20% discount on maximum of three (3) regular Ride-all-you-can tickets (not valid from December 20 January 2)
The Look/Boutique	10% discount on all regular priced Crissa, Hostess, Redgirl, Bubblegum and Egojeans products availed in any participating The Look boutiques 10% discount on all regular priced Crissa products availed in any participating Crissa boutiques

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OFFERS

Goldilocks	5% discount on greeting cakes
HBC	Free SANSAN matte lipstick #8 4gms. for a minimum purchase of P125.00

Promo duration is from January 1 to December 31, 2007

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for more details

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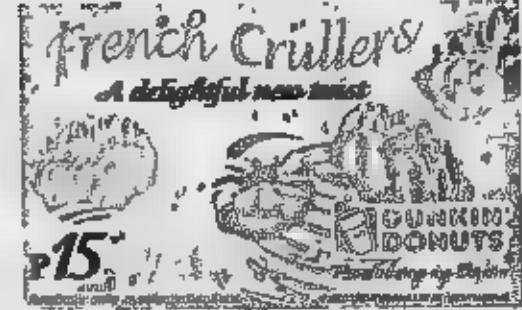
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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emme G. Velarde

SMS feedback: Inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at entertainment@inquirerc.com.ph

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment



No truth to rumored Geneva-KC breakup

GENEVA CRUZ SHRUGS OFF rumors that she and hubby KC Montero have split up. "Based na nga kami sa US para malayo sa intriga and yet we're not spared," Gen says, laughing.

They celebrated Halloween garbed in costumes, with ex-husband Paco Arrespacochaga and his wife Tiny. "We have such a cool set-up and it makes our son Heaven all the more happy. He's a straight-A student. I'm blessed that KC's parents treat him like their own *ape talaga*. I'm not yet ready to have another kid. I wanna record an album first. KC understands that. A baby can wait for now."

KC wants them to settle in the US for good. "I can sing anywhere *naman*. It's sad that there's not much artistic growth for me in the Philippines."

If there's one thing that continues to grow wherever Gen and KC are, it's their devotion to each other.

Respect and fear

Based on the statements of Piolo Pascual and Sam Milby when they filed a P12 million libel suit against Lolit Solis, the following lines struck me: "I do not relish the idea of filing suit against a colleague in the industry, especially someone who is my senior and who was once worthy of my respect... Our offer of a simple retraction and apology has been met not with contrition and truth

**DOLLY WOOD****Dolly Anne Carvajal**

but with ridicule and contempt..."

The article, read in its entirety, shows that she herself was scandalized with what she saw. She pictures us in a romantic interlude awaiting the sunset, scampering like scared rabbits upon learning of her presence."

Those lines got me thinking about the thin line between respect and fear. Isn't it better to be considered an authority in your field out of respect instead of fear? And does an apology count if the one at fault refuses to wipe the slate clean? "Hello Garc!"?

Too busy to know

Guess who this female celeb is. An insider told me that when the celebrity was a guest at a ritzy hotel in the North, a big time gambler (Mr. L) took her on a chartered flight to Hong Kong. My source says, "I pity the actor

linked to her now. He's too busy to know about her extra-curricular activities. He should ask her to let their love child undergo a DNA test."

Hmm... Can the actor proudly proclaim "The baby is mine!" or will someone else mind?

Tears and souvenirs?

Pops Fernandez's fans who

will come in full force to watch her concert "Divalicious" at the Big Dome on Dec. 8 are due to get a collector's item souvenir program. It will feature rare photos of Pops, a timeline of her career highlights, a no-holds-barred interview, and messages from her close friends and family. It remains to be seen if Martin Nievera will be included in that me-

mento.

Tears and souvenirs? How MADelicious!

Cinema 1 Originals

"Prinsesa" and "Confessional" are two films to watch out for at the Cinema One Originals digital film fest on Nov. 30 to Dec. 2 at the Cinema 1 of TriNoma North Edsa Mall and Cinema 1 of Glorietta 4.

"Prinsesa" tackles the nuances of being a parent, and having to choose between the lure of the dollar and being with the family.

It stars Romnick Sarmenta and Shamaine Buencamino.

"Confessional" is a documentary drama where crimes of government authorities are exposed. It stars non-actors from Cebu.

NO TRUTH/EX

Do Your Looks Need An Upgrade?

In the age of computers, hi-tech gadgets and WIFI, new breakthroughs have started to emerge. You often upgrade your computer, but upgrading your looks? Well you'd be surprised. With the latest technological advancements in skincare, it is a definite possibility. With these new modern devices for the skin, being more attractive is just a few zaps away.

The system LightCure Acne Therapy.

A painless, non-surgical treatment that can treat all types of acne.

The guarantee: Pimple-free clear skin.

The process: The emission of exact wavelengths of light is used for the complete elimination of the acne bacteria at the source.



The system Diamond Peel.

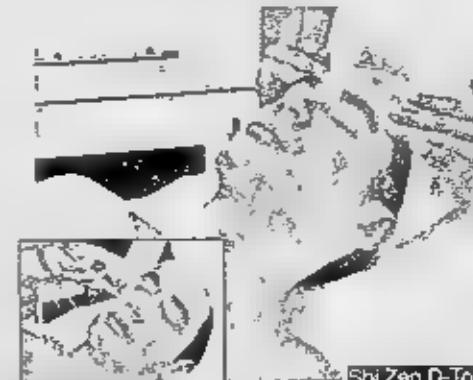
A non-invasive way of removing the buildup of debris, dead cells, marks and other flaws on the skin.

The guarantee: No more acne scars, dark spots and blemishes.

The process: A diamond dust-coated wand is used to gently scrub off all the dead cells, surface dirt and buildup on the skin's topmost layer.

LightCure Acne Therapy.

Diamond Peel.



The system Shi Zen D-Tox.

An intensive, relaxing facial that destresses while treating the skin.

The guarantee: Refreshed, younger-looking skin cleared of impurities.

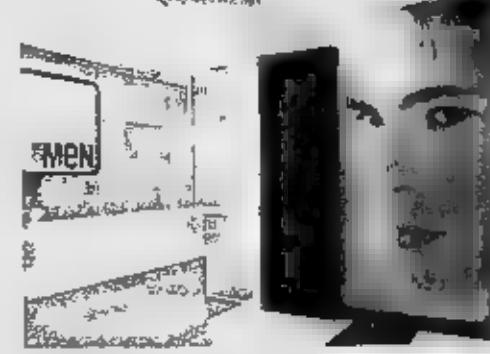
The process: Powerful ingredients like a detoxifying facial mask are used on the skin using Shiatsu massage techniques to aid in relaxation.

The system ReFirme.

An extremely popular non-invasive skincare treatment which redefines the concept of the "non-surgical facelift".

The guarantee: Firmer, tighter skin. No more sags and droops.

The process: No needles, surgery, scars



or sedation. Just a 45-minute, no-hassle, no-downtime machine treatment.

The system Advanced Lasertone.

The non-surgical wrinkle and line eraser.

The guarantee: Fine lines and wrinkles are significantly diminished.

The process: It uses a machine treatment to safely and effectively smoothen out those age signs.



All of these technological breakthroughs are available at the Facial Care FOR MEN Center. For a free consultation, call 813-7959.

**GENEVA Cruz and KC Montero**

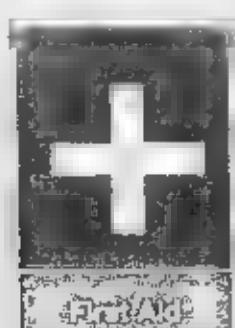
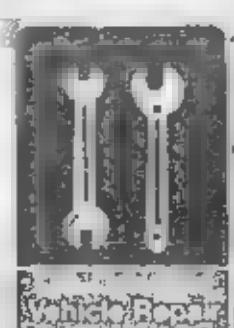
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ENTERTAINMENT

'Rappers make good actors'

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2007

WE LIKE WATCHING "THE ACTORS STUDIO" on the ETC channel, because it features long interviews with some talented and articulate artists, who provide insights into the art of creating characters.

A recent highlight was a really perceptive interview of Clint Eastwood, who traced his

amazing career from scruffy spaghetti westerns to the deeply significant films he directs these days.

Even more recently, program host James Lipton interviewed Mark Wahlberg, and the popular actor shared a surprising insight that we should think about: "Rappers make good actors!"

Why? Himself a former rapper, Wahlberg surmised that rappers' acting advantage was the fact that they had generally "lived a lot." So? So, they have a deep well of experiences and high and low emotional points to draw from when they act.

Even non-rappers can learn from those observations, if they

VIEWFINDER



Nestor
U. Torre

want to become good actors: They need to live first before they can act.

Many would-be actors can't cut it in the biz because all the have going for them is a pretty face and an ego as big as Miss Piggy's porky butt.

The pretty face can only take you so far before its appeal palls. And the gargantuan ego is a big liability, because self-obsessed people don't care for

anybody else, so they can't understand and empathize with other folks well enough to create believable and interesting characters when they act.

If you can get beyond the face and the ego, living "a lot" will expose you to a wide range of situations and characters that you need to have in order to become a productive and versatile actor.

If all you do is admire your pretty image in your bathroom mirror, you can't understand other people—and the great depth and range of human nature itself.

That, in fact, is the raw material that actors must use and creatively process in order to do good acting work. Without it, you just end up playing little variations on yourself—and that can get boring for viewers pretty quickly! Lesson learned. Thanks, Mr. Wahlberg.

Seinfeld returns

For years now, comedian Jerry Seinfeld has been wooed by many producers to stage a TV-film comeback, after almost 10 years of self-enforced retirement. But, the star comic has turned all those juicy offers down—because, quite frankly, he doesn't need the money! Residuals from his hit TV show

alone enable him to live the life of the rich and famous, so he doesn't have to work.

But Seinfeld has finally capitulated, and has agreed to both star in and executive-produce a movie—only, it turns out to be an animated feature titled "The Bee Movie."

The title harks back to "B-Movie," the industry term for a cheap film—but there's nothing cheap about Seinfeld's comeback vehicle, which has a lot of visual gloss and witty dialogue going for it. No, the film is really about bees, and Seinfeld voice-acts the story's main protagonist.

Advance buzz has it that the animated feature could end up as one of the year's best, and could even be nominated for an Oscar.

However, some of Seinfeld's fans are unhappy that they won't be able to see their idol in his comeback vehicle. Why did he opt for such a tangential reentry into show business?

Well, maybe he wanted to ease back into his career, rather than taking the psychologically full-frontal approach? Whatever; show biz icons are entitled to their "strange" decisions, and we simply hope that Seinfeld's comeback starrer is a honey of a film!

From page E1

No truth...

Publio Briones III, David Baril, Greg Fernandez, Donna Gimeno and Owee Silva.

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4 SUPER BAD	5 THE GAME PLAN	6 ONE MORE CHANCE	7 THE NANNY DIARIES
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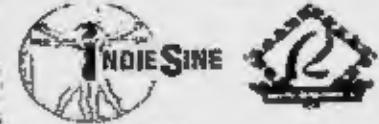
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2 ONE MORE CHANCE

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3 THE NANNY DIARIES

MTRCB GP
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FRED CLAUS

MTRCB GP
7:30, 10:00

4 THE KINGDOM

MTRCB PG-13
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5 SUPER BAD

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Mighty, flighty 'Beowulf'

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

THE LEGENDARY MONSTER-SLAYER Beowulf comes to life in the digitally animated film of the same name, a grand and visually opulent interpretation of the brave hero's astonishing feats and failures. "Beowulf," imaginatively co-written by Neil Gaiman (author of "Sandman" and "Stardust") and Roger Avary ("Pulp Fiction"), utilizes cutting-edge motion-capture technology and photo-realistic rendering.

This doesn't look nor feel like director Robert Zemeckis' previous animated feature "Polar Express" at all, as that family-oriented movie had an oddly creepy quality to it, inadvertently caused by stiff facial expressions. The imagery of "Beowulf" doesn't follow such a stylized look and atmosphere, and is steeped more in reality.

Like the real thing

There's a more expressive cast of characters that almost moves and looks like the real thing. The fantasy components, mainly the monsters, look solid and blend seamlessly into the environments.

Once you're done scrutinizing, or getting amazed by the animation, you'll be drawn into the story, a simple yet foreboding tale that enhances and makes sense of the original ancient poem. Beowulf (voiced and motion-acted by Ray Winstone), leading his Viking troops, travels to a Danish kingdom to hunt a grotesque giant that's been plaguing it. The seemingly impervious giant, Grendel (Crispin Glover), had attacked the subjects of King Hrothgar (Anthony Hopkins), who survives the onslaught and subsequently welcomes the sea-faring adventurer's offer.

Beowulf and Grendel meet soon enough,

REVIEW

and after their fateful battle, the monster's shape-changing mother (Angelina Jolie) joins the fray.

Jaw-dropping violence

"Beowulf" isn't the typical animated movie in that it has situations geared for more mature viewers, as illustrated by the occasionally suggestive dialogue and some brief nudity. There's also jaw-dropping violence during Grendel's intense attacks, which exhibit the urgency of the threat he poses. But these are aptly woven together,

and the strength of the story and such details complement Zemeckis' vision.

Apart from the surface conflicts, there are deeper mythological themes at work, exposing and exploring the imperfections of the human characters. The mistakes of some distinguished ones—their shameful, secret betrayals—eventually cost them dearly, just as legends universally depict them. And Grendel's mother, who can transform into a lovely temptress, is both the object of desire and the trickster that threatens to ruin those who are vulnerable enough to succumb.

The drama is easy to follow; characters such as the suffering Queen Wealhthow (Robin Wright-Penn), the suspicious Unferth (John Malkovich), and the love-struck maiden Ursula (Alison Lohman) serve as important foils that help define and develop Beowulf's character.

There are furious action sequences in "Beowulf" as well. It's also a sexy, rampaging epic that later challenges its viewer with an unusual denouement—but a pretty common one in fantastical myths—and might inspire discussions about the character's fallibility and integrity. Or maybe, they'll be about how real-looking and nimble Beowulf and Grendel's mother look.



BOOTS Anson-Roa and her late husband Pete

The Prime of Boots

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

BOOTS ANSON-ROA CALLED her husband Pete her mentor. After his death, she is still learning from him.

She recounted that Pete's "catalogue of illnesses" strengthened their relationship. That after enduring strokes, glaucoma, emphysema and cancer, Pete showed her the true meaning of "patience, silent suffering and undaunted faith."

In his darkest hour, Pete still thought of others, Boots recalled. "My son-in-law [Antipolo Rep.] Robbie Puno asked him what we should do with the money we had saved for his hospitalization needs. Pete answered: Make it available to those in need."

With this modest seed fund, Boots is honoring Pete's wish by putting up the foundation Prime—or Pete Roa Integrated Media Endeavors.

According to Boots, Prime is focusing on her late husband's main advocacies.

Prime is linking up with the Kapisanan ng mga Brodaster ng Pilipinas (KBP), to pursue a lecture and workshop series on broadcast education.

Also in the works is an "ad-junct program" for stroke patients who are members of the Movie Workers Welfare Foundation (Mowelfund), of which Boots is the executive director.

Espiridion Laxa, Mowelfund chair, welcomed Prime's initiative. "Our organization doesn't have enough funds. Prime's pro-

Widow celebrates husband's life by putting up a foundation for his advocacies

ject will help provide financial assistance to our members who have suffered from stroke."

Pete was a stroke survivor for 10 years before succumbing to his ailments on Aug. 9.

Prime is also mounting a drama play on the life of Pete's patron, St. Pio, written and directed by Inquirer columnist Nestor Torre.

The play is set to premiere on Jan. 16, to mark Pete's 68th birthday. His family also plans to launch Prime's other projects in the week of his birthday.

Torre, who sits in Prime's board, related that he directed Pete and Boots in the stage play "The Owl and the Pussycat" in the 1970s. "It was Boots' first on-stage kiss and bed scene. But it was with her husband."

Torre said Boots would play the mother of Padre Pio, to be portrayed by Ricky Davao and Johnny Delgado, in the new stage production.

Prime's board is composed of the Roa family's nearest and dearest: Torre, lawyer Raffy Evangelista, Jose Mari Chan, Maricuha Maceda, Dr. Bong Aquino, Fred de la Rosa, Bibsy Carballo and Ed Roa.

REVIEW

Jack summited up the show's concept precisely in one of the episodes: "Here's the thing about a great restaurant. It's like great theater. It's our job to dazzle you, amaze you, delight you... while keeping you totally ignorant of the Hiroshima going on backstage!"

And the Nolita kitchen holds many secrets, especially when work and play mix. The foibles and fixations of the naughty but devoted kitchen staff, and the food-life metaphors add up to a winning recipe.

Jack, winning over new fans—some of whom throw themselves at him—is loathed by the boss' daughter and floor captain, Miami (Bonnie Somerville). The workplace is also a place ripe with the occasional wacky rivalries, pranks, accidents, and for a time, sexual tension caused by the inclusion of a competitive female chef.

Like in recent cooking-oriented films "Ratatouille" and "No Reservations," the artistes in "Kitchen Confidential" pour a lot into their craft. So it's also attractive that apart from quick wit through snappy charac-

Familiar, uninsightful moments

NEW YORK—HAVING SET THE standard for contemporary chick-lit adaptations, "The Devil Wears Prada" is a tough act to follow. The clothes, the attitude, the scene-stealing, Oscar-nominated work from Meryl Streep—anything would pale by comparison.

But "The Nanny Diaries" especially does, and it might have seemed like solid, sufficiently mindless summer entertainment otherwise.

Based on the 2002 guilty-pleasure read by former New York nannies Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus, the film has a strong cast (Scarlett Johansson, Laura Linney, Paul Giamatti) and fleeting moments of dead-on satire. It remains essentially true to the book with a few tweaks here and there, until it loses its bite and suddenly goes all soft and gushy at the end.

In rare regular-person mode, the va-va-voom Johansson capably stars as Annie Braddock, a young woman who's unsure of what to do with her life after college. She wants to be an anthropologist, while her more practical mother (Donna Murphy) wants her to transcend her

working-class New Jersey upbringing with a career in finance.

After a miserable job interview, Annie literally stumbles into a nanny gig for a posh couple on Manhattan's Upper East Side (Linney and Giamatti) and their bratty son, Grayer (Nicholas Reese Art). To protect the guilty, the couple has been dubbed Mr. and Mrs. X in both the book and the movie.

Mrs. X seems nice enough when they first cross paths, and Annie figures, why not live a luxurious life for a few months while I work through my post-academic agita? But Mom quickly reveals herself to be a control freak, with very specific ideas about how every moment of Grayer's days

should be occupied (the Guggenheim, organic snacks and nothing that involves public transit or the West Side). Grayer is, of course, a tiny terror until the moment he does an abrupt about-face and becomes a playful, loving angel.

At the same time, Mrs. X is too busy shopping and lunching and planning fundraisers to take part in any of these activities herself, and Mr. X is so consumed with conquer-



NICHOLAS Art and Scarlett Johansson in "The Nanny Diaries"

REVIEW

ing the corporate world, he barely acknowledges that he has a wife and a son. With her fine patrician features, Linney is ideal for the role, and is enough of a subtle actress to reveal glimmers of vulnerability beneath the brittle, bony exterior. Giamatti might seem an odd choice given some of the shabby parts he's played in the past, but he's so surprisingly good here, too, you wish his character weren't drawn so two-dimensionally.

Similar to "Prada," increasingly capricious demands and explosive pratfalls ensue. Annie, who's referred to throughout as the more generic Nanny, repeatedly makes a fool of herself in front of the cute boy upstairs, known only as Harvard hottie (Chris Evans from the "Fantastic Four" movies). And her sassy best friend (an underused Alicia Keys) is relegated to looking on disapprovingly at the mess Annie has gotten herself into.

Anyone could have directed this material; "The Nanny Diaries" wasn't exactly great literature. So the real letdown comes from knowing that the film is from Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini, the husband-and-wife writing-directing team behind the thrillingly inventive "American Splendor" which also starred Giamatti as comic-book writer Harvey Pekar.

Here, their collaborative creative abilities seem to have been watered down and squelched to appeal to the widest possible audience. They tried to inject some visual whimsy into the story by depicting these rich, white people run amok as if they were species to be studied in diorama form at the Museum of Natural History. But the use of a "Mary Poppins"-style red umbrella (an image from the book's cover) feels like too obvious a metaphor.

While Berman and Pulcini vividly depict a glossy New York, a city they both clearly know well, they don't provide any fresh or nuanced insights into the class disparities that exist there: "Dear Diary, The rich are different. The end."

Christy Lemire, AP

'Kitchen Confidential' whets appetites

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

LIKE AMERICAN DRAMAS "ER" AND "SIX Feet Under," the short-lived comedy series "Kitchen Confidential" (ETC, Fridays, 8:30 p.m.) humanizes and celebrates people behind the featured professions. But the similarities end there, as this show's obviously and appropriately light and feel-good.

The half-hour weekly series, based on Anthony Bourdain's book, pleasingly concocts a rich cornucopia of work dynamics in a classy restaurant's kitchen, while serving up a flavorful assortment of personalities and eccentricities through its kooky cooks and other employees.

Actor Bradley Cooper plays an exceptionally gifted chef, Jack Bourdain, who owns up to his vice-ridden past. With the alcohol, drugs and promiscuity (mostly) behind him, his shot at redemption presents itself when he's hired by a respected restaurateur (Frank Langella). Jack soon assembles his motley crew of culinary experts, rowdy old colleagues with specialties, and yes, personality kinks.

His lovable comrades-in-culinary at Nolita include the thuggish Sous chef Steven (Owain Yeoman), pastry chef Seth (Nicholas Brendon), seafood chef Teddy (John Cho) and klutzy rookie chef Jim (John Francis Daley).

Jack summed up the show's concept precisely in one of the episodes: "Here's the thing about a great restaurant. It's like great theater. It's our job to dazzle you, amaze you, delight you... while keeping you totally ignorant of the Hiroshima going on backstage!"

And the Nolita kitchen holds many secrets, especially when work and play mix. The foibles and fixations of the naughty but devoted kitchen staff, and the food-life metaphors add up to a winning recipe.

Jack, winning over new fans—some of whom throw themselves at him—is loathed by the boss' daughter and floor captain, Miami (Bonnie Somerville). The workplace is also a place ripe with the occasional wacky rivalries, pranks, accidents, and for a time, sexual tension caused by the inclusion of a competitive female chef.

Like in recent cooking-oriented films "Ratatouille" and "No Reservations," the artistes in "Kitchen Confidential" pour a lot into their craft. So it's also attractive that apart from quick wit through snappy charac-



THE cast of "Kitchen Confidential"

ter interaction, the simulation of painstaking artistry behind the scenes is a key ingredient.

The partakers of their meals, naturally, are a quirky assortment. Jack's former lovers, as well as food critics and an old mentor, among others, are some of the tougher customers the restaurant's had. Also, one of the funnier episodes involves an escalating "war," as a prized dish gets stolen and copied by the competition. Interestingly, the sneaky but charming French chef rival is played by Michael Vartan, Cooper's former "Alias" co-star.

"Sex and the City's" Darren Star con-

tributes as pilot director and executive producer. The show manages to skillfully cram in Jack's running recovery story line with the theme of the week and supporting characters' subplots in less than 30 minutes per episode. Too bad the show was cancelled abroad; its 13 episodes almost effortlessly established a solid, sumptuous and sexy take on the restaurant biz.

While it didn't last, and was unable to explore other promising story possibilities, "Kitchen Confidential" is still a satisfying, filling course, and its limited run makes it all the more special.

SNEAK PREVIEWS

You're invited to a very unusual family reunion.



Vince Vaughn Paul Giamatti

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RP an alternative Bollywood film site

By Marinel R. Cruz

FIVE INDIAN PROducers will arrive in Manila on Dec. 4 for a week-long visit to see whether the Philippines could be an alternative site for producing Bollywood films.

This was announced by Digna Santiago, chair of the newly formed Philippine Film Export Services Office (PFESO), created solely to promote the country as an attractive film site.

The PFESO is the services arm of the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP).

The visit, which is part of the

Department of Tourism's "Film Tourism" project, was also made in response to President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's invitation to foreign filmmakers to consider the Philippines as a place to make movies during the Indian-Filipino business forum she attended in October, said Santiago.

The film producers scheduled to join the DOT's familiarization tour are Milind Soman of Pace Entertainment, Aditya Raj Kapoor of Aditya Raj Kapoor Films, Yusuf Shaikh of Maverick Productions and Anil Bohra and Vivek Bohra of Bohra Productions.

Part of their visit is a meet-and-greet with the major players of the local film industry, Santiago told INQUIRER Entertainment on Wednesday.



DIGNA Santiago



JACKY Atienza

added Santiago.

The DOT will also bring the group to scenic places in Olongapo, Bohol, Boracay and Cebu. They might consider shooting jungle scenes in our forest in Subic, or the action scenes in industrial areas there," explained Santiago. "We are also hoping to bring them to lahar country, Pampanga, where they could shoot futuristic films."

Santiago also pointed out that the PFESO has been preparing for an "exhaustive" catalogue of services, including price estimates of various post-production and animation houses, equipment rentals and hotel room rates.

The PFESO will represent the country in the Asia Film Market and Conference (AFMC) slated

from Nov. 27 to 28 in Singapore.

The conference will discuss, among other things, content protection, mobile TV, content partnerships and sports content.

According to Santiago, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye will be there for the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Philippine and Singaporean government.

The Philippine delegate will then go to Malaysia for the Creative Multimedia Content Expo 2007, an event that will showcase various components related to film, animation and broadcast. It will be held from Nov. 28 to Dec. 2.

The FDCP is subsidizing the cost of the trade booth at the Malaysian fair.

ABC 5 bags 'Asian Idol'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ALTHOUGH ABC 5 HAS LOST THE FRANCHISE for "Philippine Idol" to GMA 7, it is sending first season champion Mau Marcelo to the regional tilt "Asian Idol" to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia, next month.

"It's a fitting finale for our 'Idol' run," explained Perci Intalan, head of Creative and Entertainment Production of ABC 5. "We kept our promise. From the start, our goal had always been to allow local talents to shine abroad."

Intalan told INQUIRER Entertainment that ABC 5 had sealed the deal with Geraldine Bravo, director of Marketing and Sales of FremantleMedia, franchise holder of the "Idol" series, on Wednesday.

According to Intalan, Marcelo is competing with representatives from five other Asian countries that air local versions of the international singing competition: Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Singapore and Vietnam.

In an earlier interview, Bobby Barreiro told the INQUIRER that Indonesian network RCTI is hosting and mounting "Asian Idol."

Barreiro also said "RP Idol" main juror Ryan Cayabyab had been invited to judge in the regional contest.

Jakarta-bound

According to an insider, juror Pilila Corales will go to Jakarta because Cayabyab is now part of ABS-CBN's "Pinoy Dream Academy."

Incaban said ABC 5 is still ironing out the details of the country's participation.

But ABC 5 is airing the contest's primer "Road to Asian Idol," which offers a behind-the-scenes look at all the contestants, on Dec. 8, said Intalan.

ABC 5 is also airing the two-night "Asian Idol" special: the performance night on Dec. 15 and the results night on Dec. 16.

According to Intalan, Filipinos are allowed to vote for the "Asian Idol" winner via text. "Each voter is asked to send the names of two people—his compatriot and another contestant—to ensure a level playing field."

Barreiro pointed out that ABC 5 had actively pursued the "Idol" franchise because of its "potential to create an Asian superstar from the Philippines."

"Mau definitely has what it takes to compete internationally," Intalan noted.

"Mixed emotions," Marcelo described her initial reaction. "I'm happy, flattered and nervous. It's unexpected, but I'm proud to represent the country."



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WEEKEND BOX OFFICE		
Top 10 movies at the North American box office for the three-day weekend beginning Nov. 9		
TW/LW Title	Total gross	WR
1 2 Bee Movie	\$ 26.0 mln	2
2 1 American Gangster	\$ 24.3 mln	2
3 ★ Fred Claus	\$ 19.2 mln	1
4 ★ Lions for Lambs	\$ 6.7 mln	1
5 4 Dan in Real Life	\$ 5.9 mln	3
6 3 Saw IV	\$ 5.0 mln	3
7 5 The Game Plan	\$ 2.4 mln	7
8 ★ P2	\$ 2.2 mln	1
9 6 30 Days of Night	\$ 2.1 mln	4
10 7 Marian Child	\$ 1.8 mln	2
TW This week	↔ New	WR Weeks

BEE MOVIE

Bee Movie, Paramount (DreamWorks)

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